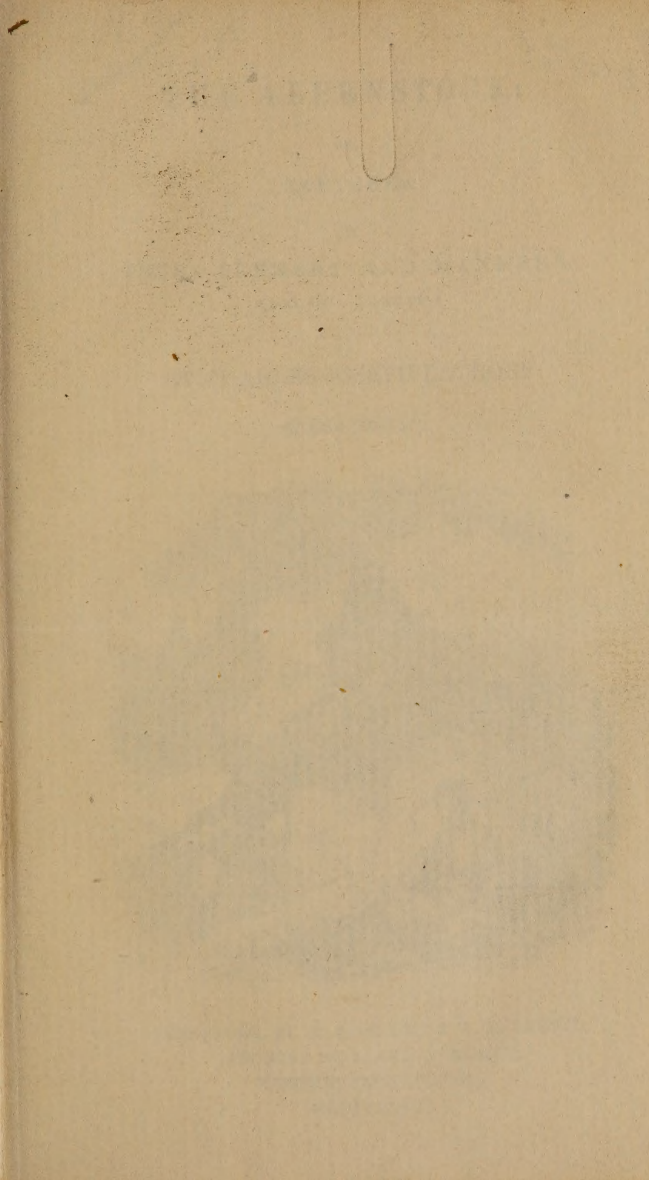


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THE ALPENSTOCK;

OR,

SKETCHES

OF

SWISS SCENERY AND MANNERS,

M DCCC XXV.—M DCCC XXVI.

BY CHARLES JOSEPH LATROBE.

SECOND EDITION.



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IN making choice of a title for the following pages, the writer has fixed upon one which would seem to entail upon him the necessity of a brief apology and an explanation. As *apology* all that can be said amounts to this: that no other was at hand equally expressive (when understood) of the circumstances under which the majority of the sketches contained in this volume were committed to paper; and as *explanation*, it may be at once stated, that the ALPENSTOCK is the name of the long iron-spiked pole, in common use on the Alps, in the hands of the chamois-hunter, the crystal-hunter, and the pedestrian traveller; and therefore not an unfitting symbol of the pursuits of one of the latter class.

Subjects of the Vignettes.

DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY S. WILLIAMS.



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THE ALPENSTOCK.



CHAPTER I.

“ Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to shew
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below.”

THE sunset of a bright autumnal day, towards the end of October, 1824, found me for the first time standing upon the shore of the Lake of Neuchâtel, at the point where its waters are deepened by the construction of a promenade, stretching to the N. E. of the town of that name.

The preceding days, distinguished by equally seasonable, but very rough weather, I had been toiling through the recesses of those deep and secluded defiles in the Jura, which, intersecting its chain from Basle to Bienne, form to the N. E. the valley of the Birse, and to the S. W. that of the Suze, two mountain-streams of considerable volume and impetuosity.

I cannot say that either my person or my accoutrements had suffered materially from the storms,

which, driving over the mountains, had showered the stained foliage of the forest thickly upon my path; or that the season was so far advanced, that travelling was no longer likely to yield its due measure of enjoyment. Yet, on entering this little town, which I had for some time back glanced at upon my map, as a temporary home, I felt every disposition to lay aside my staff, and to have done with roaming for the present. Accordingly, having entered into a contract, which left me undisputed master of an apartment about fourteen feet square, I took formal possession, by depositing the sturdy companion of my summer rambles in a corner, and strolled into the public walk.

The sun was just sinking to the horizon, throwing his beams horizontally over the whole length of the wide sheet of water, whose short interrupted waves rebounded from the masonry of the terrace, and from the Crêt, a small rocky knoll at its termination. Beyond the latter, the eye followed the continuation of the shore to the N. E. end of the lake. Behind, rose the long, steep, and forested ridge of the Jura; the white-walled farm-houses on the heights glistening against the blue sky.

Across the lake, the horizon was formed of one unbroken and widely extended chain of mountains; from the Alps of Savoy on the south, to the rocky summits in the vicinity of the lake of the Four Cantons, far to the eastward: ridge above ridge, peak above peak; their snows glowing with the red hue of an autumnal sun, which every moment rendered more intense and more beautiful.

I cannot express in words the feelings of wonder and awe with which I gazed for that first time

upon this magnificent scene ; the sense of exultation, with which my eye measured the successive heights as they rose from the steep shores of the lake, till surmounted by the towering glaciers of the central chain ; or the involuntary impulse to adore and glorify the Creator of heaven and earth, which rose in my breast, in the presence of these stupendous and magnificent monuments of his power.

During the winter-months which followed, before I had ceased to feel myself a stranger in a foreign land, the contemplation of this scene was as daily-bread to me ; and, to the delight and admiration with which I never ceased to gaze upon it, fresh interest was added, in proportion as my knowledge of its details increased.

When I entered this retired corner of Switzerland, as above mentioned, it was under the influence of peculiar feelings. A year, distinguished among the few and comparatively even ones of which my life had hitherto been composed, by a number of severe trials, was coming to a close ; trials, which are not the less painful to the individual, from the knowledge that all are more or less liable to experience them. However, from the heavy thoughts which these had left behind them, my attention and feelings were imperceptibly diverted by the scenes amidst which I was placed, the quiet of my little chamber, my books, and the kind and winning attentions of the few who knew of my existence at that time among them. Under these influences, the short days of winter passed away : time wore on,—and before the first days of March following, the earth and air began to show signs of the approach of spring.

The snow evidently diminished upon the southern

declivities of the Jura, and the little river Seyon brought down a greater volume of water into the town. The diminutive white blossoms of the *Draba verna* unfolded themselves upon the warm ledges of the Crêt; and though vegetation cannot be said to have generally commenced, there was a rustling among the dead leaves in the forest, and the dry grass of the hill side, which betokened its speedy approach.

Till towards the middle of this month, however, the season was not without its usual drawbacks. The Bize, a strong and keen N. E. wind, very prevalent in Switzerland in the interval between the winter solstice and vernal equinox, often blew for several successive days with great violence, dashing the waves of our blue lake high over the piers and embankments, and by its intensity checking the genial influence of a clear and powerful sun.

Though no more snow fell at the foot of the Jura, the cars descending the mountains at sun-rise on market days, not unfrequently entered the town with a thick coating of snow piled over their load of wood. This uncertain state of things was, however, of no long continuance.

But I had no occasion to look *abroad* for signs and symptoms that winter was passing, and a more delightful season stealing over the landscape. My habits, during the preceding winter months, had been regular and retired; I had risen early, had my stated hours for this or that study; had sat long and patiently at my desk;—and confined my rambles to the immediate vicinity, and had almost forgotten that I had had, in former years, often reason to bewail a naturally restless mind and body. But about

this time much of my soberness began to evaporate silently out of my system. My chair began to feel infinitely less comfortable than it had done before; and, for my life, I could neither sit as long, nor as immovably upon it as I had done.

I continued to find Schiller's *Thirty years' War* vastly entertaining—but for all that, I could not bend my neck over it for as long a time together. When the hour came which I had regularly set apart for the purpose of reading aloud, as I perambulated my chamber from angle to angle, I found I could seldom turn upon my toe, at the corner next the windows, on a fine sunny day, without feeling my eyes sliding edgeways from the page, leaving my tongue in the middle of a sentence. Many a sly glance did I throw into the corner where my trusty staff had been consigned to ignoble repose for so many months. In short, I began grievously to suspect that I was much the same individual as heretofore; and that the temptation held out to me by the continual sight of the distant Alps and their glaciers would, probably, under the insinuating influence of longer days and brighter suns, prove seriously detrimental to my sober and sedentary employments.

However, I must be allowed to say a good word for myself, by stating, that, in spite of much temptation from within and without, I struggled hard, and with partial success, against these symptoms, before I fairly gave in. It was the middle of April before there was any material relaxation of discipline, and the middle of June before I fairly assumed the staff and wallet.

During this period, distinguished by eight weeks of the most uninterrupted spring weather, I had

every opportunity of becoming well-acquainted with the country in the vicinity of my winter's residence.

The neighbouring mountains, with the broken country at their feet; the spacious and fertile Val de Ruz; the stupendous defile of the Reuse leading to the Val de Travers and Franche Comté; the shores of the three adjacent lakes—were all within the compass of an afternoon's or evening's ramble, and of moderate exertion.—But more of these at a future page.

After being engaged for some days in making the necessary arrangements, I quitted a neighbourhood to which I had become much and deservedly attached; being inclined, in my future wanderings, to try how far the information I had brought together, relative to the Alpine districts of Switzerland, could bear me out in my project of penetrating into their recesses, independent of the ordinary assistance and society of guides; a race of men with which I had no desire to come into contact, if I could by any means avoid it.

I knew, from experience, that my back was, thanks to God, strong enough to bear my own burden; my health sufficiently robust to support ordinary fatigue; and my spirits sufficiently unbroken and flexible to keep me up, where the body unaided might be inclined to sink from extraordinary exertion or difficulty.

Though neither misanthropic, nor of a particularly gloomy turn, I had no objection to solitude; and trusted to find, in the scenes around me, and in my own thoughts and resources, sufficient amusement to prevent my suffering from ennui.

If it were not, in the present age, set down to

an individual's discredit, to acknowledge that he is not rich enough to squander, I might perhaps add this reason also, why I did not feel at liberty to indulge in luxuries which I could possibly do without: but as the minds of men happen to be so constructed, I will even keep my own counsel, and set out as *Milor Anglais*, or what you please.

The sketches of the pen from nature may, and do often, resemble the hasty sketches of the pencil. Though roughly drawn, and destitute of the careful touch and keeping which characterize a work perfected at leisure in the cabinet, they often bear, with all their rudeness of outline and roughness of colouring, a truth and a vigour which no copy can imitate, and which any subsequent retouch would be more likely to destroy than to heighten.

If this is admitted, it will be perceived, why, in many of the following pages, the loose and irregular style of a journal, written while the impression of the objects and events attempted to be described was yet fresh on the imagination, is retained, in preference to any remodelled edition of it.

June 22.—With this day my summer's peregrinations properly commenced, as the preceding evening I had only rounded the low and swampy shores of the lake of Neuchâtel, from Montmirail to Cudrefin, and from thence struck across the hills to Avenche. A bright unclouded morning sun is never unwelcome to the traveller, and by such I was glad to be awakened.

Avenche, or *Wiflisburg*, the ancient *Aventicum*, is situated on a rising ground, at the edge of the morasses which extend to the S. W. of the lake of

Morat. The country at the back reminds me forcibly of many parts of England. Gentle hills, covered with wood; meadows and cornfields, separated by hedgerows filled with trees, whose full round masses of foliage appeared to great advantage, after being so long accustomed to the poorly clothed stems on the declivities of the Jura; pleasant gardens; the absence of the stiff and unpicturesque vineyard; cattle straying in the pastures; were features of the landscape, which chiefly prompted the comparison.

The present town occupies the site of what was once the castle, the outer walls and moatings of which still remain: thus the great and splendid city, formerly the capital of Roman Helvetia, with the exception of a few massy fragments of the exterior walls, seen here and there in the plain below, an old tower, probably the N. E. gateway, and a solitary column, has now shrunk into the inclosure formerly its citadel. But few antiquities, chiefly inscriptions and cornices, are now to be seen. I was shown a mosaic pavement, evidently that of a bath, in very tolerable preservation, at some distance from the gate of the town. Another, still finer, was discovered some time ago in a stable, but commanded no respect, as the cattle were suffered to tread it to pieces.

The above-mentioned column is to me the most interesting relic. It seems to have been originally in the angle of a building. It is clustered with smaller pillars, and seems to have been furnished on one side with small abutments for arches. On the summit two storks had built their nest, and both young and old seemed occupied with some substantial meal as I stood beneath it.

The remains of the walls are daily decreasing, from the rapacity of builders, who unceremoniously take away all the materials they can possibly make use of. Grass and fruit-trees fill the amphitheatre.

Who can visit the remains of this fallen city, and not cast his thoughts back to the far times of Julius Alpinus, and feel his heart throb over the remembrance of the tomb and record of the heart-broken Julia?

This was my second visit to Avenche. It was after a night of considerable adventure amongst the rude hamlets and bewildering swamps of this corner of the cantons of Freyburg and Berne, that the sunrise of a fresh April morning found me before its gate for the first time. It was not without emotion that I called up the recollection of the historical picture of the city as it existed in the olden time; now clothed in that indescribable mantle in which the tale of the glory and prosperity, which have utterly faded from the face of the earth with the lapse of centuries, is enveloped. Then the sight of its remains, so lonely and so grey; the luxuriance of the green sod, from which its leafless and dead walls reared themselves; the sweet breath of the spring, which made my very existence feel a blessing; all conspired to yield me some hours of enjoyment, such as has seldom been my lot, since the freshness and truth of my boyish feelings have passed.

After spending some hours in strolling about the town and its more immediate neighbourhood, I continued my route to Berne, by way of Morat. A short time before you enter the gates of the latter town, the road passes over the field of battle, signalized by the victory of the ancient Swiss over

Charles the Bold and the Burgundians, June 22, 1476.

The long struggle of the confederated cantons with the surrounding nations, for the preservation of their independence, during the 14th and 15th centuries, will hardly find its parallel in history, whether we consider the sternly noble and unambitious feeling which brought them into the field, or the hardy devotion and bravery with which they, a handful of rudely appointed mountaineers, repeatedly withstood and repulsed armies composed of the bravest, proudest, and most accomplished chivalry in Europe.

From the battles of Morgarten and Laupen, to those of Grandson and Morat, one war-cry alone seems to have thrilled through the bosom of the sturdy and simple inhabitants of these mountains : and well they obeyed the summons to die for the liberties of their country, till gold and ease wrought their usual evil work on the public and private character of the people. Then ambition, and its attendant train of vices, soon uprooted that pristine virtue which had made their forefathers renowned ; and the very field of victory, on which I now stood, tended greatly, in its consequences, to hasten this declension.

The victory of Grandson, gained over the same prince, in the March preceding, had deluged the simple houses of the Swiss burghers with gold, silver, and every article of luxury ; for Charles had marched to his overthrow upon that spot with all the pomp of a victorious monarch entering his capital, and had fled with the loss of all, even his own ducal ring.

At Morat, an overthrow, more signal, if possible, left the victors in possession of the remnant of those spoils which he and his nobles had amassed in an hitherto successful and victorious career: and the period of comparative tranquillity, which the Swiss cantons immediately after enjoyed, gave but too much time and opportunity for the nurture of the passions to which the acquisition of so much wealth and luxury unavoidably gave rise.

The famous *ossuaire* or bone-house no longer exists. After remaining untouched for a period of upwards of 300 years, it was destroyed by the French army under the revolutionary generals, on their entry into Switzerland in the year 1798. Its former site is marked by a plain unadorned obelisk. From this point I made a digression to an eminence above the village of Münchwyler, to visit the great lime tree, traditionally reported to be the very tree under which the Swiss generals held their council of war on the evening preceding the battle. Whether true or false, a survey of the immense trunk and towering branches is quite sufficient to add to the credulity of the credulous, if not to stagger the incredulity of the unbeliever. I never saw a tree of that species which could at all be compared to this, either for size, luxuriant growth, or the beautiful disposition of its large masses of foliage. It would appear to be still in its prime.

Münchwyler once possessed a convent, and may still boast a venerable church.

The lake of Morat, which it overlooks, was the scene of a very singular phenomenon, during the earlier months of this year, 1825.

I remember the report reaching Neuchatel—

through the medium of the market people passing from one lake to the other, (some time during the winter), that the waters of the lake of Morat had suddenly become the colour of blood, though I could meet with no one whose testimony was sufficiently clear and unequivocal to establish the fact. This, joined to my not having the leisure then to come and see for myself, caused the matter to slip my memory entirely, till I found myself in the neighbourhood. Here the circumstance was fully confirmed to me in a manner not to be questioned; and having since met with a paper, written by M. de Candolle of Geneva, on the subject, I shall take what is there stated as my best guide in mentioning the facts as they occurred.

It appears that this singular phenomenon began to excite the attention of the inhabitants of Morat as early as November last year, and that it continued more or less observable during the whole of the winter.

Mr. Trechsel, a gentleman then resident at Morat, to whom M. de Candolle applied, on hearing the report, for information and specimens of the colouring matter, stated—That during the early hours of the day no extraordinary appearance was observable in the lake; but that a little later, long parallel lines of reddish matter were seen to extend along the surface of the water, at some short distance from the banks. This being blown by the wind towards the more sheltered parts of the shore, collected itself about the reeds and rushes, covering the surface of the lake with a light foam; forming, as it were, different strata of various colours, from greenish black, grey, yellow, and brown, to the most

delicious red. He adds, that this matter exhaled a pestiferous odour during the day, but disappeared at the approach of night. It was further observed, that during tempestuous weather it vanished altogether. Many small fishes were seen to become intoxicated while swimming amongst it, and after a few convulsive leaps, to lie motionless on the surface.

The naturalists of Geneva decided, from the specimens sent, that it was an animal substance, which, if not the *oscillatoria subfusca*, was nearly allied to it.

Soon after the beginning of May it disappeared entirely. It is not known that this phenomenon has appeared before on the lake of Morat within the memory of man. Tradition states the same to have happened the year preceding the great battle.

From the Lime tree I struck across the country, and did not join the main road till I arrived at Campenach. At Gümmenen I crossed the Saane, here flowing in a deep dell, with steep sandy acclivities on both sides. The stone of all this country, from the limestone of the Jura to the breccia at the foot of the Alps, is a soft sandstone, called molasse, varying in colour from a dull red to greenish grey, and disposed in horizontal strata with layers of gravel between.

From the height above Gümmenen there is a fine view of the long range of the Jura, rising from the shore of the lakes at its foot, like a vast rampart of precipitous heights. The regular line preserved by the different ridges composing its chain, when viewed from a distance, is very singular. No trace can then be discovered of the profound defiles by which they are intersected.

My road led me forward through a fine broken tract of country, sprinkled with villages and country seats, till I entered the avenues of lime trees which announced my approach to the town of Berne, whose arcades, fountains, minster, bears, and environs, afforded me much amusement for the following days.

The situation of Berne is sufficiently picturesque and remarkable to attract notice, even were the views from its ramparts and environs less beautiful than they are universally acknowledged to be. It is built upon an elevated peninsula, round which the waters of the river Aar sweep alternately E. and W., in a deep and varied channel.

A favourite promenade of the citizens called L'Engé, situated a quarter of an hour's walk from the North West barrier, has always appeared to me pre-eminent among the numerous exquisite points of view in this neighbourhood. The town, with its several gateways, steeples, and the tower of the minster rising above the crowded roofing of the houses, here appears in the middle ground, separated from the point on which you stand by the deep wooded dell of the Aar. Upon its brink, the outermost houses are crowded in the oddly fashioned manner usual in old fortified towns, where each seems to depend upon its neighbour for support, and form a long irregular line, descending gradually towards the lower and further extremity of the peninsula, where the bridge is situated. Beyond appear the varied and broken country towards Belp, and the lake of Thun; and over this the finest portion of the Berne Alps rear their sparkling masses to the clouds. The view from the area before the

minster is too universally known to need any description in this place.

During my stay I was the honoured guest of a family of kind and hospitable friends, whose country house was situated on the brow of the hill commanding the town. In the occurrence of these days I find nothing of a nature sufficiently novel to merit insertion here. That which I have the tact to perceive to be very common place, I should hardly be acting wisely to trouble the reader with, however amusing I may find the recollection of it to be to myself.

June 25.—I set out between three and four o'clock in the morning on the high road to Thun. As I advanced, the sun rose upon the landscape; and by the time I reached the village of Muri, at the distance of a league from Berne, the summits of the Alps before me were all glowing in his clear and unobstructed light. I need not spread out my page by describing this line of road, which, though very picturesque, was productive of no adventure.

I entered Thun, after a little more than three hours march, with a crowd of peasants bringing their various commodities to the Saturday's market. While sitting in the elevated church-yard, which commands one of the finest coups d'œil in Switzerland, I observed a bridal party entering the church, and followed in the rear to see how the ceremony was conducted.

The officiating clergyman afforded me an opportunity of observing the clerical costume of the country. This consists of a black serge gown fitting close to the shoulders and body, but falling from the small of the back in long full plaits, loose hanging

sleeves and cuffs, and a thick white ruff round the neck. A black brimless hat is carried in the hand.

The couple first sat apart, on different sides of the church, and the minister had just begun to read the prayers or rather the exhortation, when an unexpected interruption was experienced, by the sudden apparition of a poor idiot, who it appears had been employed to toll the bell on the happy occasion; and who now came scrambling out of the roof, by the assistance of a creaking ladder, finishing his descent by a thundering leap or tumble on the gallery boards. This seemed to be considered as an indecorous intrusion. The *Herr Pfarrer* stopped short, and the bride elect, who by the by was neither young nor handsome, stared round with an expression of some impatience; while the clerk, by whose side I had posted myself, held up his fist in a menacing posture, and uttered a loud *Whist!* The poor fellow, who seemed to have no idea of the mischief he had done, now remained mute and motionless; the clergyman continued the service, the happy couple once more cast their eyes upon the ground, and, after a few short prayers, were made man and wife by simply joining their hands.

My plan was now to turn my steps towards the Stockhorn chain to the westward, and to visit the Simmenthal which lies behind it, before entering upon the examination of the higher and more central portions of the district termed the Oberland. Accordingly, after spending some hours in the heat of the day at Thun, I turned to the south-west towards the range of precipitous mountains named after the singularly-shaped rock which rises about the centre of the chain.

While walking along the high road leading from Thun to the valleys of the Kander and Simmen, I occupied myself with narrowly examining the face of the precipices, to the bases of which I was gradually approaching, to discover, if possible, some ravine which might enable me to cross the mountains, instead of keeping the regular route to Wimmis and the entrance of the valley beyond. But, seeing no possibility of ascending the range from this side, I walked soberly forward till I came to the vicinity of the village of Reutigen. There the feasibility of my first idea again struck me, from the appearance of the mountain side above that village, though I had now passed very considerably to the southward of the Stockhorn itself.

I left the road accordingly ; and, after steering through the pastures and the irregular village to the foot of the mountain, began my climb over several miles of very steep pasture land, upon the slippery verdure of which I had no little difficulty to keep my footing. Here I made my first experience of the various and important uses of the *Alpenstock*, the long iron-shod pole, for which I had exchanged my ordinary lowland companion at the town of Thun, and which subsequently stood me instead in many a hazardous slide and leap. After an hour and a half's toil, I approached the summit of the Günzenen, the last of the Stockhorn range next the Niesen, and separated from it by the entrance into the Simmenthal. Here I found a small ch  let, with a good Swiss matron in the door-way, milking her goats. From her I learned that I was four leagues from the summit of the Stockhorn, and was consequently deterred from attempting to reach it.

The approach of a stormy night, and the utter hopelessness of a clear view of the higher Alps, even if I did reach it, served to reconcile me to a change of plan.

I therefore determined, after five minutes' rest and a basin of milk, to think no more about it, but to find my way over the opposite side of the mountain into the valley of the Simmen.

Some general directions I got at the *châlet*; but whether they were not particular enough, or whether I mistook them, I cannot determine. Soon after losing sight of it, I came to a spot commanding a peep into the valley beneath, with the Simmen running through it, and the village of Erlenbach, whither I was bound; but at such a depth below, as prepared me for a long scramble before I could make sure of a night's shelter. The first track which I hit upon, after quitting the bare head of the mountain, led me into the pine forests which girdle all these chains at a certain height, and there I lost it. The second, on which I could not enter without retracing my steps a considerable way towards the summit, led me again into the forest for about a mile and a half, and then disappeared, like the former, in the vicinity of a deserted log-hut.

I again took the only way which seemed to promise a favourable result, re-ascended to the upper pastures, and made choice of another track, which I followed for another fifteen minutes, through the forest into which it brought me, till it came to a termination at the verge of a precipice of five or six hundred feet, being formed, as I afterwards found, solely for the purpose of dragging the fallen pines to the edge, and precipitating them below, as is the custom in these mountains.

Here then I came to a stand, and for a moment imagined that I was fagged, and out of heart. With a very small portion of daylight remaining, the mountains opposite me enveloped with thick vapours, gradually spreading themselves over the valley, and a feeling of dispiriting doubt resting upon the issue of any other attempt I might yet have the opportunity of making, I began seriously to think of a bivouac in the woods. Here, I thought, I had a first taste of that kind of ill-luck which must often be my lot in the Alps, if I persisted in denying myself the luxuries of guidance.

After some further musing, I roused myself, having recruited my good temper by a little rest, and my bodily strength by an application to my leathern bottle; and found myself free from the irritability resulting from disappointment, and ready to make another trial.

I emerged once more from the forest, and was sufficiently fortunate to take another track which led to some inhabited chalets, and what was better still, to a stream of water. Here all doubt and difficulty ended.

In less than three-quarters of an hour I stood at the door of the parsonage at Erlenbach, a village then to me of no more interest than the hundreds nestled in the sheltered valleys of these mountains—now one of those spots to which my heart clings with an affection which is interwoven with the thread of my being.

CHAPTER II.

“ Into that forest farre, they thence him led
Where was their dwelling, in a pleasant glade,
With mountains round about environed,
And mighty woods which did the valley shade,
And like a stately theatre it made,
Spreading itself into a spacious plain :
And in the midst a little river play’d,
Among the pumy stones, which seem’d to plaine,
With gentle murmur, that his course they did restraine:—
* * * * *
Beside the same a dainty place there lay,
Planted with myrtel trees and laurels green;
In which the birds sang many a lovely lay,
Of God’s high praise, and of their love’s sweet teen,
As it an earthly paradise had been!”

THE Simmenthal is one of those long and fertile valleys, which, descending from the central chain of the Berne Alps to the northward, serve to carry off the waters of the glaciers at their head, as well as the tribute of numberless streams of greater or less volume, flowing through the transverse ravines and glens. The Simmen, running through it, issues from the side of the Rätzliberg, at a spot called, from the peculiar appearance of its scource, the *Sieben Brunnen*, or Seven Fountains.

After a course of above twelve leagues, it issues into the open country between the Günzenen and the Bär, a singular rocky hill, which rises up directly at the entrance of the Simmenthal, near Wimmis; and after many windings in the comparatively open tract between the mountains and the

lake of Thun, is joined by the Kander, draining the next range of valleys to the Eastward, and immediately after enters the lake just mentioned. The valley is divided into two districts or bailiwicks, the Ober and Nieder Simmenthal; the seat of government of the former being at the castle of Blankenburg, near Zweysimmen, and that of the latter at Wimmis. It is hemmed in throughout its whole extent by high mountains, those on the left bank of the Simmen being attached to the Stockhorn range, and those on the right to different offsets from the central chain. The pastures and forests which cover their sides, form the riches of the inhabitants who occupy nine large, and numerous smaller villages and hamlets scattered through the valley, including Wimmis and Reutigen at its entrance.

The morning after my arrival in Erlenbach, as just related, I issued forth with that feeling of interest and curiosity which it is so natural to entertain with regard to a scene whose outlines were but dimly descried in the preceding evening's twilight.

The parsonage (to the inhabitants of which the name of a common friend had been my introduction) is situated upon a knoll, upon the sun-side of the valley, a few paces higher than the simple white-walled village church and humble church-yard. The immediate vicinity is occupied by a flower garden, stocked with many a shrub and flower, created to bloom under a far different sun and sky. The white walls of the house, and the pillars supporting the little side-galleries at the gable, were covered with a profusion of vines and the thick foliage of the Virginian creeper. Behind, a wild mountain-torrent, descending from the mountains to the north, dashed down a rocky

and shady gully, in the side of the hill, turned a small mill for bruising bark, and then made its way through the village to the Simmen, whose gentle murmurings filled the ear from the depth of the valley.

Eastward, the eye descried the entrance of the Simmenthal, broken by the forested head of the Bär, and bounded by the declivities of the Niesen on the right, and Günzenen on the left; a portion of the mountains near Brientz appears on the small extent of distant horizon visible. Up the valley, the eye rests upon the rocky mountains beyond Boltigen. The village occupies the slope of the hill immediately beneath the small plateau upon which the church and parsonage stand.

Across the Simmen the Diemtigenberg, with its farm-houses, pastures, and black patches of pine forest, presents itself as a middle-ground, over which tower the steep summits of the chain of the Männliflüh, of which the Niesen is the termination.

It was Sunday, and the picture was rendered more lively by the groups of peasantry sitting in the church-yard, or coming leisurely up the steep foot-path leading from the village.

I am thus particular in attempting to describe this retired spot, because it is one to which I must make continual reference in future. It became, from that very day, a central point from which I started for my summer rambles to every part of the country, and the home to which I always turned my steps when my object was gained, or when disappointment or indisposition made my solitude wearisome.

Thus much I feel, that I never quitted that threshold without being accompanied on my road by the warm good wishes of those whom I left

behind; and never entered the doorway again without feeling that there was truth and honest-hearted affection in the welcome which greeted me. But they need not this weak testimonial of my value for their unvarying and disinterested friendship.

A visit of ten days was the first result of my introduction to this worthy family.

The season was very unsettled, especially after the first few days. However, I had some opportunity for the examination of the mountains in the vicinity, and did not fail to take advantage of it.

The baths of Weissenburg, situated in the side of the mountains to the N. W. about two leagues distant, were the first remarkable point to which I was conducted.

We pursued the main road leading up the valley, past the village of Därstetten, till we reached the hamlet of Weissenburg. Then, turning short to the right, followed a ravine, which narrowed at every step till it became a chasm in the breast of the mountain, so deep and profound, that the baths, which are situated in its recesses, enjoy only from two to three hours sun daily, during the height of summer. The buildings erected in this gloomy spot, at the brink of a boiling mountain-torrent, are of a considerable extent, and furnish accommodation for a great number of visitors during the summer months.

The mineral springs do not rise here, but much deeper in the gorge than even this point, and their water is conveyed to the baths by wooden pipes running along the face of the precipices for several furlongs. It is clear, and as far as I could judge, perfectly tasteless. The ordinary temperature, is

about 82° Fahr. : though I was told that in the morning and evening it is several degrees warmer. As to its peculiar uses, each seems to entertain a different opinion, though all agree it is highly medicinal.

I was conducted by my companion still deeper into the ravine, by a precarious and narrow footway running above the edge of the torrent, to see a precipice, up which the country people have formed a pathway to the higher pastures, by means of grooves in the face of the rock, and ladders in other places where passage was otherwise impossible. Two or three hundred feet of dizzy precipice are in this manner rendered surmountable by practised heads and feet. A trial of about half the height proved to me, beyond a doubt, that mine were not yet steady enough: and I was glad to find myself once more with whole bones at the baths. Our return home added nothing to our adventure worth recording.

The chamois is abundant in this and the neighbouring mountains. The wolf and the bear are sometimes, but rarely seen; but the lynx is not unfrequently shot. I was told, that in 1823 the lightning fell upon a large pine on the opposite mountain and killed thirty-nine sheep lying beneath it. They were buried on the spot; but, a few days after, a hunter passing near, espied four full-grown lynxes very busily engaged in scratching them up again. He fired, killed one, and the rest of course took the nearest road to the forest. The museum at Berne contains some very fine specimens of this large and powerful cat. They are of a yellowish red colour, with very large green eyes, and sharply pointed ears.

One main object in my turning towards this part of the country had been to ascend the Stockhorn; accordingly we had anxiously watched the signs of the weather, morning, noon, and night, since my arrival, and only waited the dispersion of the gray masses of vapour which rested on the summits around us, to make the attempt.

On the afternoon of the 27th the wind rose, and put these in motion; and in the hope that they might completely clear off before we should have reached the end of our three hours' climb, my host and myself took our alp-poles and set off. Following the green margin of the brook behind the house, we advanced slowly up the mountain towards the belt of forest separating the higher from the lower pastures, and, after an hour's walk, reached the foot of a high precipitous ridge between the Walpersbergfluh and Mossfluh, two enormous piles of bare perpendicular rock, each soaring to the height of many hundred feet above the head of the passenger. Over this ridge, a rough pathway led us to a profound hollow in the mountains, the bottom of which is occupied by the Stockensee, a deep and gloomy lake. The rocks on the ridge were covered with a profusion of the beautiful flowers of the *rhododendron ferrugineum*; and our tin-cases began to fill rapidly with specimens of alpine botany, which, though familiar to my companion, were for the most part new to me.

We were now in the region of vapour, which, however, being driven to and fro by the wind, never concealed the same point long together, and we had accordingly partial glimpses of the four summits surrounding the hollow of the Stockensee, that to

the N. E. being the Stockhorn itself. After another long pull over a steep tract of pasture land, vying in the freshness and luxuriance of its covering with the most beautiful turf in my own country, we approached to the last and most laborious stage of the mountain.

This commences with a narrow ridge of considerable length, stretching between two profound hollows, and hardly broader than a dog's back, (from which it has its name, *Hundsrücken*,) leading to the last inclined range of wide pastures immediately under the head of the Stockhorn. Upon the highest point of this we stood, about four o'clock in the afternoon, a gigantic pile of limestone rock forming, on the side opposite to that we had ascended, a precipice of above 700 feet perpendicular. The elevation of the Stock (the name given to the crest of the mountain) is about 7260 English feet above the level of the sea.

We were now above the vapours, and, occasionally at least, under the influence of a bright and powerful sun; but, alas, the country below, and the whole line of glaciers to the S. E. and E., were covered with a dense and impenetrable mass of clouds. The sound of the herd-bells, rising through the mist, from the valleys beneath us, was truly tantalising.

Alpine plants clothe the little patches of soil amongst the rocks of the Stockhorn to the highest crag; and the *myosotis perennis*, clustering at the foot of the lightning-shivered beacon, sparkles in the sunshine, with a depth and intensity of colour, which may vie with the blue ether in whose purest dews it is ever glistening.

After an hour and a half's sojourn on the summit,

waiting in vain for a final dispersion of the vapours, we commenced our descent, crossed over another part of the flanks of the mountain, to a second black and dismal lake ; and, pursuing our course towards the valley, came at dusk to a *châlet*, round which some thirty head of cattle were, in various picturesque groups, awaiting their turn to be milked.

As the term *châlet* has already frequently occurred in these pages, and probably will do yet oftener, I will here once for all attempt to give a general description of the appearance and appropriation of the kind of building to which it is applicable.

It is constructed of the trunks of the pine, either merely stripped of their bark, or more or less accurately squared. They are laid horizontally one over the other, intervals of about three inches being left, to admit a free passage for the air. Across the rafters, which form a very obtuse angle, a roof of shingles of great thickness is laid, and kept in its place by transverse rods with heavy stones upon them. The smaller *châlets* have no interior partition, and are merely used as barns, where the hay of the adjoining meadows is stowed away for winter use, or as a mere shed for the cattle.

The next in size, like that in which we are seated, is appropriated partly to these purposes, and partly also to serve as a summer habitation for the *vacher*, or cowherd, where the operations of the dairy may be carried on, while the cattle are on the higher pastures.

In this case, a loose partition is run up, the second division containing a rude fire-place, or hearth of stones, a few shelves for stowing away the cheeses, milk, and utensils of the dairy, a small cauldron, and one or two stools. A loft is then constructed in

the roof, and serves as a dormitory for the vacher and his assistants.

But there is another class, belonging to the richer peasants, much more extended and elaborate in their construction. The two kinds here mentioned, however, are the most frequently met with.

It is computed that there are 12,000 of these buildings within the limits of the Ober and Nieder Simmenthal.

The old gray-headed peasant who had made us welcome to a seat in his *châlet* and a bowl of milk, was now spending his sixty-second summer on the mountains, having commenced this kind of life at twelve years of age.

When our thirst was sufficiently quenched, we resumed our descent into the valley, and soon reached our night quarters, consoling ourselves with the result of our botanical gleanings, for the partial disappointment we had experienced from the mountain mists*.

A few very unfavourable days followed. But even the remembrance of these is enlivened by much which to me was highly interesting.

In the intervals between the showers it was delightful, as a novice among these vast scenes, to take my stand in a little gallery, under the wide projecting roof of an outbuilding, which commanded an uninterrupted view down the valley, and to watch the movements of the heavy and fantastic masses of gray vapour sweeping majestically over the sides of the Niesen and Bettfluh. Towards

* For a tolerably complete list of the Flora of the Stockhorn and the neighbouring ranges, see Appendix.

evening the clouds very frequently became more broken, and before the close of the day, one or two little bright yellow patches of sunshine might be observed straying slowly over the mountain sides opposite; one moment casting a transient and capricious light upon a portion of the black forests, and at another, a faint gleam upon the bare rocks at the summits.

A fair afternoon towards the end of the week was taken advantage of, to make an excursion to the mountains opposite the village, principally for the purpose of examining one of the superior class of châteaux.

After crossing the Simmen, and entering the forest which in general clothes the mountains to a lower line on their north than on their south sides, our little party entered the gully between the Diemtigenberg and its neighbour, which brought us, in about two hours' walk, upon the Rinder-alp *.

From the elevated range of green pastures known by this name, we enjoyed a magnificent view of the valley beneath, the Stockhorn opposite, the Spillgärten and Röthihorn to the S. E., and part of the lake of Thun, and the mountains beyond. We found the large chateau on this alp still uninhabited, the cattle not having as yet been conducted beyond the middle range of pastures on the slope of the mountains; and therefore continued our walk to the next alp about half a league distant.

This we found covered with a large herd of cows belonging to one of my friend's parishioners, and

* It should be remarked, that the term *alp* is frequently made use of in these pages, in the sense usually conveyed by it in Switzerland, viz. a wide extent of mountain pasture.

shortly reached the *châlet* where he, his wife and family, and their *valets*, had their abode, as long as the pasturage around was sufficiently abundant to supersede the necessity of removing their *ménage* to a still more elevated situation.

On our entrance we found all hands busy scouring the various utensils which had been used in making the cheese of the day, which had just been put into the press.

The visit of their pastor and his friends seemed to call forth the exertion of their best efforts to entertain us.

In five minutes a table was covered with a clean napkin, and new milk, a pitcher of whey, a huge basin of snow-white curds, bread, butter, and cheese, and a bowl of rich cream, placed upon it; with an apology for the poorness of the fare, of the necessity for which I leave the reader to judge.

The *vacher*, a strong, tall, well-built peasant in the prime of life, stalked about the premises, seeing that the duties, which must be neglected for no one, were duly performed by the *valets*; now and then thrusting his head into the dwelling apartment where we were seated, to exchange a word with the pastor, and to see that his eldest daughter, a ruddy-faced healthy looking girl, took good care of us.

His wife gathered the five younger members of the family together, and gave us a long history of their good and bad qualities.

The *châlet* in which we were seated was much more spacious than any I had yet seen. One portion of it, fitted up in a homely but comfortable manner, with plastered walls and small casements, was set apart as the dwelling place of the *vacher* and his

family. A second division, more open to the air, contained, upon a wide hearth in the centre, a huge brass cauldron, weighing above two hundred weight, in which each day's milk was heated in the process of cheese-making. A third division was the dairy, properly so called, furnished with shelves, and large flat wooden vessels of milk and cream, and convenience for stowing away the cheeses, curds, and butter, &c.

The end of the building corresponded to the rude structure of those already described. The lower part serving as a cowhouse, and the upper as a hayloft. In the vicinity of a large *châlet* of this description, there are several of the meaner kind, for the convenience of depositing the hay, or for the reception of the cattle in bad weather.

These good people have above one hundred cows to milk, morning and evening, and every day put into the press a cheese weighing nearly two hundred pounds.

The *vacher* leads his cattle from the skirts of the mountains to this line of pasture about the beginning of June; and, towards the end of July, removes with his whole establishment to *châlets* in a still more elevated position, where the same course of life is pursued, as long as the season is sufficiently favourable, or the pasture sufficiently abundant.

As sunset drew near, the cattle began of their own accord to come slowly over the pasture from every quarter of the alp, towards the *châlet*, and to remain standing in its vicinity till they were milked. The alp-horn is not used in the Simmenthal.

Two of the valets, setting out towards another part of the mountain where the goats were browsing,

gave me the first specimen of the peculiar mode of singing usual among the inhabitants of these regions. I do not mean the *Kuhreihen* or *Ranz de Vache*, but what is termed in Swiss German *Yodlen* or *Yuchzen*. A full prolonged tone of the falsette, produced with considerable exertion, and moving through the most simple modulations, without the articulation of any words, is the best definition I can give of it.

The two performers generally sing in simple thirds. While close by, the sound was too harsh, and the violent exertion with which it was produced too apparent to allow of its being pleasing. But, as they descended the slope of the mountain, the effect was really delightful, and the tones so clear, strong, and sonorous, that it required an effort to believe that they were proceeding from the rude throats of the individuals before us. The melody is of course but little varied. It is astonishing to what a distance the sound may be heard, in the calm clear atmosphere of an evening in these elevated regions. Long after the performers had disappeared among the inequalities of the scene before us, our ears caught, from time to time, an isolated cadence, mingling with the chime from the bells of the herds.

Our retreat was soon after sounded, as the rays of the sun were falling more and more obliquely upon the green turf of the mountains. We descended to the eastward into the valley of Grund, passed after dark through the village of Diemtigen, and gained our quiet retreat just as the moon was rising above the Bettfluh.

The same kind of broken weather distinguished the commencement of the week following. The

mornings were commonly very tempestuous, and the view from my gallery was much curtailed by the heavy lines of clouds sweeping along the mountains, almost to their base. However, as the afternoon or evening seldom passed by without a bright gleam of longer or shorter duration, the pen and pencil were often laid aside for the purpose of making a forced march to this or the other interesting object in the immediate vicinity of our village.

There seems to have been, in the old feudal times, a complete chain of castles throughout the whole length of the Ober and the Nieder Simmenthal. In the latter division, that of Wimmis is the only one still in existence, and a considerable portion of it has been modernized. In the neighbourhood of Erlenbach, the sites of no fewer than five of these strongholds can be pointed out. The largest of these was situated at Weissenburg, and was for many years the principal castle of the rich and puissant barons of that name. Sufficient traces exist to fix its situation with certainty, but no more. The castle of Erlenbach or Ringoldingen was, it is believed, placed on an elevated knoll to the west of the parsonage, but little or no trace remains of it. A noble lime-tree, however, marks the spot.

Two castles, now level with the ground, formerly commanded the entrance into the valley of Diemtigen. The fifth, and most remarkable for its situation, is that of Gaffertschink, near Latterbach. This was posted half-way up the precipices on the side of the Günzenen, on a projecting buttress of rock, and might well be deemed impregnable; either from above or below, a casual observer would fancy it was inaccessible. A rough and hazardous climb over

the broken face of the crag, upon the ruins of a former dizzy foot-way, brought me upon the ledge. Here I found the ruins of a square tower overgrown with a deep thicket of brushwood; and I am very much inclined to suspect, after a careful examination of the horizontal surface of the rock, that this isolated tower was all that ever existed, and was only used as a watch-tower or advanced post, commanding the entrance of the defile into the valley.

The little open gallery [before] mentioned became, almost invariably, the post of our family circle as soon as the shades of evening began to steal along the depth of the valley, or the sun gave notice that he was about to set, by the red beams cast upon the opposite mountains. Of the luminary itself, we lost sight at a very early hour, owing to the high mountains at our back.

I should vainly attempt to paint the feelings with which I had now, for many evenings, tranquilly watched the day-light fade away from this delightful landscape; the mingling of sweet rural sounds which the village sent forth, while the sun was still gleaming brightly upon the towering ridges of the Niesen and Bettfluh; or the delicious calm which stole over the senses, as both light and sound gradually died away, nothing remaining of the one but the faint twilight and the glow on the western sky; or of the other, save the dash of our little mountain-torrent, and the distant murmur of the Simmen. Still later, the moon rose slowly over the mountains, and continued skirting the outline of the Tschukken and Rinder-alp for an hour or two; then dipping again beneath their edge, the shadows spread once more

over the valley, restoring its obscurity, and leaving all objects (except some of the high rocks to the north, which still retained the moon-beams for a while) to the reign of that calm and solemn twilight, which lingers in our zone throughout the short hours of a summer night.

July 6th.—A fine cloudless morning giving reason to hope that the steady rise of the barometer during the two preceding days was no unmeaning token: I was roused early, according to my desire, and shortly afterward quitted the house where I had experienced so much unexpected pleasure from the friendship and hospitality of its inmates; leaving hostages, however, for my return, as soon as my various plans would allow me.

Having now once more fairly entered upon my pilgrimage, I made it a matter of conscience, in my first moments of solitude, to bring myself to that state of mind which I felt to be absolutely necessary, if I meant to follow my original plan of travelling with any degree of internal satisfaction and contentment.

So, then, I forthwith bade solemn farewell to the cheerful society to which I had hour after hour looked for amusement and information, under the roof of the good Swiss pastor; to many social comforts; and more especially to that self-indulgence into which you are allured by the kindness of friends attentive to the gratification of every wish. This done, I was once more prepared to love solitude and to seek company in my own thoughts.

A boldly-constructed stone bridge of a single arch is thrown over the Simmen, just before the

river and the road leading to Thun emerge from the narrow gorge between the Bär and the flanks of the Simmenfluh, a rocky hill attached to the Günsenen. This conducts the traveller close under the hanging woods and rocks of the former, to the village of Wimmis. The white-walled castle is perched up against the steep but forested declivity of the same mountain, while the village occupies a large patch of ground, stretching from its foot towards the base of the Niesen, rising directly to the SSE.

From Wimmis, I struck across the country towards Æschi, the spire of whose small church was my landmark during the next two hours' walk over a fine but perplexing woodland region. As I advanced into the open country, the view expanded towards the glaciers of the Blümlis-alp, and others in the same chain to the SE. rising silvery white, high in the air, under the glowing light of the morning sun. After passing Æschi, however, my road led me too close under the mountains to the south of the lake of Thun, to admit of a distant prospect in that direction.

Soon after nine o'clock, while making my way on the shore of this delicious lake, I was very sorry to observe, on glancing back towards the entrance of the Simmenthal, now far in the distance, that the Stockhorn, Niesen, and all the more elevated summits in their ranges had each become enveloped in that small round mass of fleecy clouds, which in this country is deemed a sure prognostic of stormy, unsettled weather.

However, I was now in motion, and there was no finching. The further end of the lake was soon rounded; and I arrived at Interlacken.

The magnificent scenery which renders this village so deservedly celebrated, even among the Alps, was, as I had in a great measure anticipated, divested of its brightest feature. The extremity of the long valley leading to Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald, was enveloped in one high-piled, motionless mass of heavy clouds, and the whole surface of the heavens began before noon to betoken speedy and heavy rain.

This was no empty show. The evening found me seated, in but indifferent case, before a scanty fire in the travellers' room in the inn at Lauterbrunnen, chilled to the bone, chafing my hands by application to the flickering blaze, and my temper by various unprofitable reflections upon my bad fortune and disappointment. However, as I grew warm, I got better tempered, and found I could hope for to-morrow, while I despaired for to-day.

The morrow came: and with it every sign of the continuance of the provokingly bad weather. Far from the Jungfrau being visible, it was with difficulty that the eye could trace the outline of the Wengern-alp at its foot; and the numerous cascades tumbling down the sides of the latter seemed really to fall from the clouds.

It was, to be sure, a bad speculation, to go out with no other prospect than that of being rained upon: yet to remain in the inn, adding my quota to the yawns, ennui, and discontent of some thirty or forty English, Russian, and German travellers, all, like myself, sighing for fair weather, did not appear to me to offer a much better alternative.

Therefore after breakfast, I set off to see the cascades, the only objects in the valley which were

likely to gain any thing from the rain. The principal of these, the Staubbach, descends into the valley close behind the village. The height of the fall is computed at 800 feet; but I should think, that, in this number, the joint height of one or two additional falls on the Plechberg above, not observable from below, are included.

The graceful manner in which its light vapoury columns dispose themselves, one over the other, in the first stage of their descent from the edge of the precipice, is very remarkable. Each of these, after the first rupture of its waters by the action of the air, takes the appearance of a white star followed by a long tail. This nucleus, however, is soon dispersed, and further down nothing is seen but a light gray vapour, the particles of which being once more collected by a jutting ledge of rock, fall from thence in light, thin, and widely dispersed streams.

I should imagine that the line of the fall was very rarely perpendicular. Whatever force the weight or impetus of the stream may exert against the action of the wind in the first part of its descent, is soon at an end; and the vaporous part must be almost always bent by it. After lingering in the neighbourhood of this cascade, and visiting several others of a similar character, I continued my route up the valley, intending to reach the falls of the Schmadribach, a stream which descends from the glaciers about three leagues distant.

I suppose better than half this distance had been accomplished (at least I had come within sight of the upper works of the cascade rolling down the mountain side, about four miles distant) when two footways made their appearance, each, for any thing

I could see to the contrary, leading to the end proposed.—What a terrible thing is *choice*, either to an ass in his provender, to a school-boy between right and wrong in parsing, to a statesman between conscience and expediency, or to a pedestrian at the junction of two equally plausible ways.

One of these paths crossed the torrent rolling down the valley, and seemed to lead over rocky, but firm ground, to the point opposite the Schmadribach. The other kept this side, and appeared to traverse the ruins of a great avalanche, called the Trachsel-lauine, and to admit of the possibility of advancing quite up to the foot of the falls. I chose the latter; why, I need not, because I cannot, say. After crossing some preliminary pastures and broken land, on which I found amusement enough from the variety of alpine plants growing upon it, I was sorry to find my path-way dwindle into a mere sheep-walk, leading up to the green patches among the rocks to the left. However, as I saw no impediment, in the remains of the avalanche before me, to my pursuing the road on this side the stream, I flattered myself that I might make good my advance, and crossed its edge.

I found it to consist of an enormous mass of rock, earth, ice, and snow, in most wonderful confusion, covering a surface of many hundred acres of the slope of the mountain.

After toiling for some time amongst this rubbish, I came to an impediment I had not observed or anticipated. This was the *gletscherstrom*, a swollen and boisterous torrent, running from the glaciers above. Of the base of the latter I had now a front view, at a great height above me, looking very grim

and formidable through the opening burst in the top of the precipice, by the passage of the monster on whose remains I was treading.

The uncomfortable qualm which came over me at the natural idea, that, if another avalanche thought proper to descend, I was full in its path, was not lessened by observing that part of the snows of the old one under my feet, which had descended some years ago, were covered by the *débris* of another, which, by its whiteness, had certainly come down within a few weeks. I then made up my mind that if I got safe to the Schmadribach this way, I would even try to discover another on my return.

It was not without difficulty that I found stepping stones for the passage of the foaming torrent, and advanced; but another furlong or two, and I saw that further progress was next to impossible.

Other streams from the glaciers dashed and murmured on every hand, making their way under the ice and snow, which was chiefly piled on this side, keeping no channel, but turning and twisting, and working deep caverns and hollows in these materials, whose treacherous archings I felt no inclination to tempt further than I had done, as long as *face about, march!* would give me an alternative. With one or two disappointed glances at the Schmadribach, and three or four more very suspicious ones at the opening in the rocks above, I began to retrace my steps, and soon arrived at the Gletscherstrom.

I had insensibly bent my steps downward, and came upon its bank at a point where it was very broad and strong, dashing over the fragments of rock with a noise which almost deafened me. Into

this rude and desperately cold bath my person and accoutrements were a few moments afterwards consigned, by the strength of the stream dragging my pole from its anchorage, as I was attempting to leap across, after in vain seeking for a place where I might traverse it speedily with less risk. It need not be mentioned that I scrambled out as well and as soon as I could ; and without stopping even to shake myself, or to inquire what damage had been sustained, set off at a pace which soon carried me out of the bounds of the Trachsellauine. I am fond of the water ; but there was something a little too unceremonious in the impromptu ducking I had received, and I felt my temper considerably affected by it, as long as the water continued to bubble up out of my shoes, and drain from the various extremities of my apparel. However, strange as it may seem, this trifling but unexpected adventure made me at once decide upon my plan of operations for the rest of the day. I knew that violent exercise would be the best antidote to any evil consequences I might have reason to apprehend, and determined that I would make no stay at Lauterbrunnen, but, in spite of the continued dark and unfavourable weather, go and spend the following night on the Wengern-alp. Another consideration helped to make this project a sensible and even a well-conceived one. I had given up all hopes of a speedy change of weather ; yet I knew that, bad as it was, there was one chance, and only one, of accomplishing the main object of my visit to Lauterbrunnen, that was, a near view of the glaciers of the Jungfrau and Eigers : this was, to be on the higher mountains at day-break, when, if at any

time, during even rainy and thick weather, the higher Alps are free from clouds for a few hours.

If this experiment did not succeed, it was indeed a lost case. After some slight refreshment on my arrival at the village, I settled my bill, shouldered my knapsack, and strode away.

While commencing my ascent of the first stage of the opposite mountain, which is sprinkled with cottages, I remarked that the approach of a stranger had put their inmates in motion, each pouring from the doorway the younger members of the family. These beset the devious foot-way leading up the hill-side, in a long scattered line to a considerable height, just like a train of gunpowder, which only awaited my approach to explode. And so it was: for, as I advanced, one after the other set up her or his pipes in succession; offering me little bouquets of roses, or the *orchis nigra*, and begging a *batz* in return.

Had it been a fine warm day, I might have looked upon this preparation for my entertainment with a good-natured desire to be entertained; but it was terribly raw and cold, I had had a ducking which still made my teeth chatter in my head, and, I own, I looked upon this preconcerted plan of attack upon my ears and my pocket with a very jaundiced eye. Besides, a dear-bought night's lodging and refreshment had tended to induce a passing economical if not parsimonious humour. So there was but a poor look-out for these songsters.

Accordingly, the first two applicants I passed without noticing. The third screamed most vociferously, holding her petticoat ready for the *batz*. She sung so loud, that I could not avoid looking her full

in the face, and by way of stopping her song, gave her a chuck under the chin, which she received with a low courtesy. Somehow or other this softened my heart considerably. The next, a bright-faced little girl, was the gainer by it, as she held the flowers so near my fingers, that I was absolutely obliged to take them, and of course to give her the batz. Seeing the success of the last-mentioned, and that importunity had gained the day, the following insisted upon my taking her rose. I stopped and asked: 'Which of us was the poorer?' She answered, without hesitation: 'That she was;' and there was something in the ready simplicity of her answer, and the glance she threw down to her naked feet, which made me ashamed of the sophistry, or whatever it was, which had dictated the question, and of course I satisfied the demand.

The last and highest cottage turned out a party of five, a great boy, three little girls, and a sharp black-eyed urchin. These all made music. After giving once, it becomes very difficult to refuse. This I felt, as I approached the rear-guard. The boy I put to flight, by saying I thought he was old and strong enough to earn his bread in a different manner; and, turning to the rest, added, that begging was not originally a Swiss trade, and that they were abusing the beautiful flowers of their mountains, and the old and simple customs of their forefathers, when they made them the excuse for an idle life and desire after the batzen of the stranger. Perhaps they did not understand me; but the mother did, and came forward from the cottage-door, with her youngest still at the breast. She pleaded poverty, and a large family, and the

bad weather, which obliged the elder children to remain idle at home. She said she was a Swiss born, and did not like to see her children beg; but the bad custom had crept in no one knew how. She spoke like a mother, though a faulty one, and of course was irresistible.

After two hours' march, mostly in heavy rain, I arrived at a number of châteaux situated on the brow of the Wengern-alp; just at the edge of that deep and gloomy ravine which separates it from the Jungfrau. Only one of these miserable log-huts, open to all the winds of heaven, was inhabited by a poor vacher and his two boys. He possessed, upon hire, two cows and half-a-dozen goats, and made his livelihood by passing the summer with them in this wild solitude, for the sake of the pasturage.

While he prepared a little warm milk, I told him, if he would spare me some straw, and the shelter of his roof from the rain, which continued to patter down from the dull sky, I would stay with him till morning. A fire of logs before me, my wet shoes and coat off, a night-cap on my head, and wherewith to satisfy thirst before me, I began to feel the comfort of roof and shelter, in the absence of all those things generally considered comforts, and to forget all the accidents of the day.

I had not been seated ten minutes, before a loud explosion from the mountain opposite gave warning of an avalanche. I hastened to the door-way, and saw that the lower part of the Jungfrau, which rose directly before me, had become totally free from vapour, though the numerous summits of the mountain, and of course the greater part of the glaciers, were still covered with an impenetrable

mass of clouds. This lower part consists of lines of the most fearful precipices, in steps of some hundred feet each, with patches of green herbage dispersed over their ledges, and grooved here and there by deep and narrow perpendicular furrows.

The two principal of these, immediately opposite to the Wengern-alp, serve as channels for the greater part of the avalanches originating on the slopes of the glaciers on this side of the mountain; a great portion of these declivities having apparently a bearing either to the one or the other.

I came too late for the *lawine*, which had roused me; but in the course of the evening had my utmost curiosity satisfied with respect to this awful phenomenon.

By far the greater number were seen pouring down from one precipice to another, like a huge cataract, accompanied by a loud explosion, or a series of explosions. All the minor ones have this appearance. But it was my fortune to be witness of another kind, much more awful and imposing in appearance, and we had reason to think, much more disastrous in its effects.

The vacher had been absent from the châlet about two hours, his cows being in a shed upon another part of the alp, and had just returned, it being then about seven o'clock in the evening.

In the course of the evening, he had directed my attention to a small flock of sheep, on one of the above-mentioned green patches of pasture, situated on the ledge overhanging the precipices, about half-way up the lower part of the mountain. To an observation of wonder at their exposure, in a situation apparently so dangerous, he had replied, that

they were the property of a private person at Lauterbrunnen, who ran the risk, for the sake of the extraordinary luxuriance and richness of the grass on that slope; and added that, moreover, being situated under a high rock, with a deep ravine on either side, the danger was not so great, when once fairly lodged there.

Half an hour after his return, just as the shades of approaching evening began to render the dull light from the chalet-door barely sufficient for me to guide my pen upon my paper, I was roused from my seat by a distant rumble, and hastened to the door-way. The sound continued to increase, but for some short time nothing was to be seen in motion. At length we saw the avalanche emerge, like a rolling cloud of dense smoke, from the fogs resting upon the mountain. It rushed forward like a whirlwind down the last stage of the glaciers, and approached the edge of the precipices. My breathless attention was naturally directed towards the advancing mass; when it was diverted, by hearing the vacher cry out, from the little elevation to which he had run—*‘O God! the sheep, the poor sheep!’* My eye instantly glanced at the little green slope, and had hardly time to take cognisance of its situation, before, dashing high over the precipice above, the snow, ice, and rock poured down upon it, swept like lightning over its surface, and then hurried down out of sight into the depths of the Trümletenthal, leaving the spot of green a patch of dingy brown. There could be no doubt but the sheep, whether few or many, were instantaneously overwhelmed. No living animal could be seen anywhere on the precipices; down which, by the regular

channels, the snow and ice, disturbed and set in motion by the great avalanche, continued to thunder for several minutes after.

It was about eight o'clock when I crept up into my resting place, as I was invited to do, in '*Gotte's name*.' I found this to be the little loft close under the low roof which was perfectly open at the gables. A little hay and straw, a piece of sacking round my body, and my knapsack for my pillow, made up the sum of my bed furniture. I laid down just as I was, having first diminished the quantity of my mattress by stopping the interstices between the logs with hay—thanked God for the shelter over my head, and composed myself to rest.

My neighbours at the other end of the plank soon gave token of sound sleep.

Rest I had, but no sleep. During the ensuing eight hours, I often shut my eyes, but I believe never entirely lost my consciousness.

Many and busy thoughts awakened by my peculiar situation, may have been one reason; but, setting these aside, the rain pattered too loudly close to my head: the wind piped too shrilly through the openings in the roof and sides; the straw crackled too incessantly with every heavy breath I drew, and above all, the roar of the avalanches thundering down the mountain side over against us, was too frequent to suffer either my imagination or my senses to grow torpid.

To the latter I listened with a feeling of awe perhaps better imagined than described.

At four o'clock in the morning my host roused me; and, peeping through the hole, through which the wind had been buzzing close to my ear all night, I

saw, with no small exultation, that the clouds were dispersing from the mountain, and becoming tinged with the sunbeams. I rose, and after performing my ablutions, we both left the *châlet* together; he to milk his cows and goats, as the evening before, and I to gain the highest part of the alp, about two miles distant. After half an hour's climb, through thick grass, quite saturated with the heavy rain, I reached this point.

Meanwhile the sky had become perfectly clear, while the valleys appeared on every side filled with masses of rolling white vapour; and I think I may be excused for indulging in a harmless chuckle over the crowd of travellers whose number I had left upon the increase at Lauterbrunnen, and in some transient self-approbation for the superior generalship I had somehow or other evinced.

The Jungfrau and two Eigers, with the Wetterhorn and its neighbours to the eastward, all rose before me in unclouded sublimity; the early morning sun lighting up one peak after another, and making the long waste of glaciers between them sparkle with the whiteness and brilliancy of burnished silver. As the sun rose higher, the light stole downward toward the immense range of dark granite precipices which supported them, and illuminated the exterior layers of fleecy vapour, rising midway from the depths of the Trümletenthal below.

After remaining some time on the summit, I noticed that the clouds, which on their descent to a certain level had become perfectly motionless, now began to rise very rapidly and to spread themselves far and wide.

This was the signal for my speedy descent; but

they came rolling up the side of the mountain with such velocity, that I was soon enveloped in a white mist, so dense as to render my return to the chalet a work of considerable difficulty. I took advantage of a partial brightening in the atmosphere about two hours after, to set off and make the best of my way over the damp surface of the Wengern-alp and Little Scheidegg to Grindelwald, where I arrived after a march of nearly three hours; contented with a succession of bright gleams which had favoured me the whole morning, and given me all the advantages I could possibly hope for in the present state of the weather*.

* The Wengern-alp is elevated about 6,685 English feet above the level of the sea.

Jungfrau 13,748

Schreckhorn 13,470

Eiger or Mönch 13,524

Finster-Aarhorn 14,070

Great Eiger 13,050

Wetterhorn 12,220.

As the particulars of the first successful ascent of the Jungfrau, from the village of Grindelwald, in the month of September last year (1828), may not have become generally known, the following brief sketch of that adventurous expedition is subjoined.

The principal details are taken from an account published towards the close of the year by the original projector, Mons. C. Rohrdorf, a gentleman of Zurich, resident at Berne.

It seems to have been long decided, by all persons acquainted with the details of the northern face of this vast mountain, that any attempt to reach the summit from the north could never be attended with success. The lines of gigantic precipices which rise immediately from the base, over which the crumbling rock and the avalanche are continually impending: the fearful accumulations of ice and snow which overtop them, and sweep upwards in broken and disjointed fields towards the superior ridges and pinnacles, seem to have opposed such appalling and positive dangers to the attempt, that for many years all idea of the possibility of success from this quarter had been abandoned.

The aspect of the southern acclivities of the Jungfrau and its neighbours, on the other hand, has been hitherto but little known; as between them and the Vallais there intervenes a wide-spread

Seeing however that no permanent change for the better had taken place, or was to be expected, I

tract of almost inaccessible country, extending for many square miles round their bases, and restricting the observation and approach of man to several leagues from their flanks.

It is an established fact, however, that these frozen ridges and glaciers were, in early times, frequently passed in safety by mountaineers desirous of repairing directly from the village of Grindelwald in the Berne Oberland, to the Valley of the Rhone; and that a pathway over the Upper Grindelwald glacier, and across the ridge of the Viescherhorn to the village of Viesch in the Vallais which seems to have been in frequent use in the sixteenth century, was open as late as the year 1712.

The former existence of such a track gave M. Rohrdorf the first idea of the practicability of approaching the Jungfrau from the south-east, and he determined to make an attempt to trace the direction in which it formerly ran.

Accordingly, on the 21st of August, 1828, he set off from Grindelwald, accompanied by twelve peasants, a proportion of whom were chamois hunters. In the course of the first day they scaled the upper Grindelwald glacier, and ascended to a small hut which the government of the canton had caused to be erected for their accommodation. Here they passed the night, at the height of about 5,600 feet above the sea, and had subsequently to remain inactive in the same shelter, on account of the stormy weather, till the 26th.

On the morning of that day they continued their ascent, traversed the glacier to the westward, and reached the ridge of the lesser Kallihorn. From thence they proceeded to a line of precipitous rocks, bounding the great glacier of the Viescherhorn, and towards the evening gained the foot of the greater Kallihorn, rising behind the Eiger. They passed the night in a spacious cave, about forty-five feet broad at the entrance, and fifty-three feet in the interior. At the further extremity of this they saw three other caverns, into which they did not penetrate.

On the 27th at day-break, (Reaumur's Therm. at zero,) pursuing their course, they gained the edge of the upper Grindelwald Viescher glacier after about an hour and a half's toil, but did not reach the precipitous crest of the same till three o'clock, P. M. (Therm. 31° in the sun). Shortly after they found themselves opposite the Mönch, upon a steep ridge of snow, over the surface of which they slid down, and advanced towards the point where the two great glaciers of Aletsch and Lötchen adjoin each other. Upon this wilderness of ice and snow the thermometer stood at 9° towards nightfall, and

thought it my wisest plan to push on in the course of the afternoon, if possible, to Meyringen, between

even at midnight, at 40 above zero. The moon shone bright all night.

Here M. Rohrdorf remained with a number of his party, and despatched the rest to reconnoitre in what direction the Jungfrau, which now rose directly before them to the N. E., might possibly be ascended with the least risk.

These pioneers reached the edge of the glacier of the Jungfrau in safety; but, in consequence of a tempest of wind which overtook them, were unable to proceed, and returned to their companions.

M. Rohrdorf was now convinced of the possibility of attaining the highest summit from this quarter; but, not thinking it advisable to proceed at present, commenced his return with the peasants, descending by nearly the same route as that by which they had mounted, and reached Grindelwald in safety on the 29th.

From this village he repaired to Berne, with the intention of preparing the instruments necessary for the measurement of heights and distances, and then of returning without delay to resume and achieve his enterprise.

During his absence, the mountaineers who had accompanied him, as just related, conceived a feeling of jealousy at the idea of a native of another Canton obtaining the honour of being the first to ascend the untrodden summit of one of the most remarkable of the Berne Alps, and determined among themselves, with more display of national feeling than of honour, to wrest the triumph from him, by taking advantage of his temporary absence, and setting forth to perfect the scheme to which his well-directed ingenuity had afforded them the clue. Accordingly they did not wait for his return; but six in number, viz. *Christian Bauman, Peter Bauman, Ulrich Wittwer, Hildebrand Burgener, Peter Roth, and Peter Moser*, set off from Grindelwald on the 8th of September. They took with them all M. Rohrdorf's apparatus, ropes, ladders &c. with an iron flag or ensign, twenty inches long by fifteen broad, attached to an iron rod ten feet eight inches in length, and weighing thirty-six pounds. Their intrepidity and success cannot atone for their want of common honour and just feeling.

They followed the same direction as before, proceeding up the glacier between the Eiger and the Mettenberg, and passed the first night in a spacious cavern, situated on the south side of the Great Eiger, and named the King's Cave by M. Rohrdorf.

The following day, the 9th, they mounted the glacier of the upper Veischer glacier, and bent to the westward towards the glacier of the

six and seven leagues distant, over the Great Scheidegg. Here I hoped to find my valise, and the means of refitting my wardrobe, my bad fortune hitherto having made dry apparel a scarce article.

Accordingly, I quitted the inn at Grindelwald about noon; a troublesome scramble of near two hours brought me over the inferior acclivities of the

Jungfrau, passing the night among rocks fallen from the Finsteraar-horn, in the vicinity of the Grünhorn. On their march they picked up the skeleton of the purple heron (*ardea purpurea*).

On the 10th they set off at early dawn, and, returning towards the foot of the Jungfrau, scaled and followed the *crête* descending from it towards the Breithorn, and thus commenced their ascent of the mountain itself from the S. E. They approached the first snowy escarpment of the mountain, planted their ladders, and passed it in safety.

The second they traversed in like manner, and then reached the edge of a very steep unbroken acclivity, which sweeps up to the very base of the southermost and highest pinnacle of the Jungfrau, and from which they had been obliged to retire in their first attempt, on account of the wind. They took their course obliquely over this waste of ice, which was here but partially covered with snow; and after a further toil of three hours, being occupied in digging foot-steps as they proceeded, they arrived at the foot of the highest pinnacle.

Peter Bauman was the first to ascend it. He describes it as a narrow ridge of sharp rock, rising out of the solid ice, and running from SW. to NE. about twelve feet long, and only *two inches broad* at the edge. Setting himself astride upon it, he advanced gradually by the assistance of his axe, and was followed in like manner by his companions, until they found a horizontal surface of about two and a half feet under them.

Here they punched a hole in the centre three feet deep, and erected their signal as securely as possible. After thus leaving a memento of their success, they backed carefully off their dangerous position, and commenced their descent, spent the night on the spot where they had passed it with M. Rohrdorf on the 27th of August, and on the 11th returned in safety to Grindelwald.

The ensign was visible from Berne, Thun, Interlacken, and the adjacent country, till towards the end of December, when it disappeared.

mountain, and I began to hope that I might possibly gain the ridge of the Scheidegg *, and have a glance at the probable line of my further route to the eastward, before the tempest which I had long seen gathering behind me, should add to my perplexities. But before I could make good my purpose, I was suddenly overtaken by such a tempestuous wind and torrent of piercingly cold rain, accompanied by a dense fog, as I never before experienced.

Against this storm, which continued unabated the whole of the afternoon, I had to struggle for between three and four hours longer, often in doubt of my path, and frequently for a moment quite bewildered. As far as the ridge of the mountain, I had taken the print of a horse's hoof as my guide; but soon after the commencement of the storm, I lost it on a long drift of half-melted snow. Thence I followed a sheep-walk, which, after some time, brought me to a number of deserted châteaux; and here, what with the violence of the wind and rain, the thickness of the mist, and the multitudes of grooves and furrows by which the earth on every side was deeply indented, from the hoofs of the cattle, I bade adieu to all track, finding it impossible to judge which, among the many leading in every direction, might be the right one.

The wind was now the only guide upon which I could place any dependence. I knew that it had blown for several weeks from the S. W. and that Meyringen lay to the S. E. of the mountain, upon whose flanks I was wandering. I therefore exposed my right cheek steadily to its current, and made up

* The Great Scheidegg, 6,711 feet above the sea.

my mind that I could not go far wrong, as long as I did so. Meanwhile, to give honour where honour is due—the contents of my leathern bottle stood me in good stead—and helped to keep me in heart, mettle, and heat. Heart and mettle I never lost for a moment, even when most bewildered; but heat I certainly did; my fingers were glued, as it were, to my alp-pole by the icy coldness of the wind and rain; and in spite of continued and violent exertion, my whole body trembled with cold. After some further wanderings, I got into a forest of pine, in which I was overjoyed to see two wild-looking cows and some cut wood, and soon after arrived at the brink of a ravine down which rolled a mountain-torrent. This I knew must be the Reichenbach, and that I could not do better than follow its current.

About four o'clock I came to a human habitation. The vacher wished me to enter, but I refused, knowing that I must keep in motion if I would keep in health; and about two hours after I entered the inn at Meyringen, more like a fish than a human being.

CHAPTER III.

“ Nor vainly did the early Persian make
His temple the high places and the peak
Of earth o'er gazing mountains: and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear'd of human hands! Come and compare
Columns and idol dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer.”

MEYRINGEN is one of the largest and handsomest villages of the Oberland. It lies at the upper extremity of the vale of Oberhasli, a fair and spacious valley, through the whole length of which the river Aar takes its course from the mountains of the Grimsel to the lake of Brienz. Many of the cottages in the village are esteemed perfect specimens of the rural architecture of the Canton.

The inhabitants of this valley and the adjacent mountains rank as the finest race in Switzerland, and are supposed to have the same Scandinavian origin as the original inhabitants of the three Forest Cantons*, from whom their valley is only separated by the Brünig. The features of the inhabitants of both

* Among the minor facts which may be plausibly brought forward in support of this traditional idea, may be mentioned the similarity that exists between the method of making inclosures in these portions of the Alps, and that mentioned by Dr. Clarke, as universal in Sweden, Lapland, Finland, and Norway, 'by sloping splinters of deal, fastened by withys against upright stakes.'

sexes in fact differ materially from those which characterize their neighbours, and though not generally handsome, there are those among them who may lay claim to a degree of beauty very uncommon in the class to which they belong.

The costume of the men consists of a kind of striped blue jerkin, without breast or arms, so that the waiscoat and shirt sleeves form part of their outward apparel, short small-clothes, and white woollen stockings gartered below the knee. That of the women, on Sundays, is composed of a vest of black velvet, fitting close up to the throat, and very narrow at the back ; white, full, and stiffly-starched sleeves, coming down to the elbow, and a full and equally stiff greenish-yellow petticoat. A small black hat, not much larger than the bowl of a soup-ladle, is stuck at the back of the head : and from underneath this the hair descends in broad plaits to the heels. On week-days, a red handkerchief is substituted for the hat, and a red vest for the black one. Marriage, baptism, and burial have each their distinct costume.

As I proposed staying some days here to await, and to write letters, my first object the morning after my arrival was to present my credentials to the clergyman ; in order to procure myself, through his recommendation, a quiet home in the cottage of one of his parishioners.

I very soon got suited to my mind, in the house of a reputable widow, still in her weeds, a quiet middle-aged woman, with a family of three or four children, whose affection I discovered I had won, from the moment they found I could shoot with the cross-bow almost as well as themselves.

Here I occupied a large clean apartment with white curtains before the latticed windows, and drip-white bed furniture. Now and then the good mother came herself to see and ask if I was comfortable, otherwise I had the attendance of a stout peasant girl, who, in her eagerness to see that the gentleman should want for nothing, paced to and fro over the little platform of boards leading to my chamber, with footsteps as noisy as the stampers of an oil-mill. My otherwise solitary meals were enlivened by the society of a black and white tom cat with torn ears and one eye, who swore, by way of giving thanks, over every morsel I bestowed upon him.

The same spell as heretofore lay upon the weather during the five days I spent in this village; and, though I took advantage of every gleam of sunshine, to sally forth and examine the surrounding country, the interest of my visit was of course greatly diminished. The numerous falls and cascades tumbling from the mountains were in their glory; the continued rains having swollen many of them greatly beyond their usual volume, and brought others into action, which never appear in ordinary summers.

Besides the falls of the Reichenbach on the opposite side of the valley, two large cascades descend the face of the alp directly behind the village. The one, a clear stream, comes tumbling over the side of the hill after a short course through the pastures and green declivities of the lower mountains; while the other, a dark, turbid, and powerful torrent, pouring its waters down a black rift into the same water-course below, takes its rise among the snow and ice of the Hohenstollen and Rothhorn far in the interior of the country. As a barrier against the

floods which these conjointly pour down into the plain in the winter, a broad and strong wall is built the whole length of the village.

Many portions of the fine even tract of country forming the bottom of the valley, and stretching from Meyringen to the lake of Brienz, are rendered perfectly desert from the violence of these floods, which bring down from the surrounding mountains an immense quantity of rubbish, spreading far and wide on either side of an otherwise trifling water-course.

On the 13th, I determined to start the following morning for the Grimsel, as I had great faith in the approaching change of the moon, and was impatient to proceed on my tour. After a day spent within doors—I took advantage of a fair sunset, to stroll into a bye path leading down the valley close under the woody hills to the right of the church. This led me through some delightfully varied scenery, till it joined the main road, leading towards the village, from the lower bridge over the Aar. I had hardly set my foot upon it, before I heard the tinkling of the goat-bells behind me; and wishing to see this animal under the multitude of varieties which a large herd presents, I stopped short till they should overtake me. They soon appeared in sight, having left their mountain pasture at sunset to return to be milked in the village, where they always pass the night. Most of the larger Swiss villages have an individual, employed by the inhabitants conjointly, to take care of their goats during the day. This goatherd, who is often an idiot, makes his appearance in the main street at daybreak; he sounds his horn, and each peasant turns his goat or goats out

of the stall. The animals then herd instinctively together, and are led on to the mountains, where they feed during the day, and are brought back, as just mentioned, at night-fall.

They came forward, trotting across the bridge over the Aar, pushing and skirmishing with one another, with every sign of saucy impatience. The goatherd, who walked after them with his coat hanging over a stick upon his shoulder, and a great pair of dun heels peeping out of his clogs at every step he took in the mire, was a true modern specimen of this class; perfectly unpoetical and unphilosophical in appearance, in spite of the poetry of his profession. Instead of 'tuneful quill,' his lips were busy with a short black tobacco-pipe.

In the herd of above one hundred goats which seemed to be conducting him to his home, there was a great variety of colour, from milk-white, through all the shades of yellow and brown to black. There was equal difference in the quantity and quality of their coats, some being covered with a long and shaggy hair, and others with a short and smooth fur. Most of them had beards, though all female; and some of them, in addition, two little tufts at each side of the throat, which looked for all the world like cap or bonnet strings.

When we approached the village, they became much more clamorous and quarrelsome, and I could see and hear that there was strong skirmishing in the van. Immediately on entering it, we were met by a crowd of children, many not above three or four years old. They came forward to meet us, and mingling with the herd, began to seek and pick out their several pets. When found, they grasped their

horns, or put their little arms round their necks, and directed them home. Many of the goats stopped short at the door of their owner's cottage, and bleating, demanded admittance; while others, of their own accord, set off at a canter up the bye lanes leading to their homes, and were out of sight in an instant. The first welcome of a master or mistress for their goat, as well as the cow, is a handful of salt; and it is amusing to see with what eagerness they follow and lick the hand that allures them with it.

At the close of a day full of such variety of scenery and incident, as that afforded by a forced march from Meyringen to the hospital of the Grimsel, from thence by the glacier of the Rhone to the summit of the Furca, and further still to the bourg of Hospenthal at the foot of the Gotthard, it really becomes something like a task to give even the outline with any degree of perspicuity and exactness.

The appointed signal having dispersed my dreams about four o'clock on the morning of the 14th, I was very glad to see a cloudless blue sky peeping through my lattice window, and, on rising, to believe that there was every prospect of the long-expected change in the weather having commenced. I dressed and breakfasted with all speed, and in half-an-hour, having bade my good landlady good morning, I strapped on my knapsack, slung my schnaps-bottle over my head and shoulders, and, pole in hand, sallied forth.

As the spring is to me the most delightful time of the year, when every sense gives its portion of enjoyment, so the early morning is the most delightful time of the day. In my days of castle-building,

this was my sweetest time for them, and my most glowing phantasies were morning dreams; and I never, or very seldom find myself breathing the sweet and untainted breath of the early morn, without feeling my heart beat with some small portion of that enviable boyish enthusiasm, which reigns in the breast while the world is new.

The sun had not yet risen upon the deep valley, but his first yellow beam was stealing over the Wellhorn and the glacier of Rosenlauri, which came into bold relief with their glistening snows upon the pale blue sky behind. However, at the termination of the half hour which was occupied in scrambling over the rocky pathway, with which the road to the Grimsel commences, immediately after crossing the covered bridge over the Aar, most of the mountain tops were enlightened.

On emerging from the forest clothing Mont Kirch, I came most unexpectedly in full view of the little valley of Grund; and I think I never saw a more delicious picture than that which it presented at this early hour. Directly to the south the gigantic rocks and woody declivities of the Pfaffenkopf, partly illuminated themselves, cast a deep and mysterious shade into the long ravine leading up to the Grimsel, and over a portion of the little mountain-encircled plain occupying the middle ground.

The sun found an inlet for his beams through the entrance of the Gadmenthal to the E. and glancing athwart the centre of the valley, partially lighted up the low-roofed cottages of the hamlet, and the foliage of the trees which thickened in their vicinity, over which the gray mist was still hanging: they then fell full upon a broad perpendicular buttress of rock

attached to the Burghorn to the right. Long lines of cattle and goats were quitting the hamlet, and traversing the Aar by the wooden bridge leading to the Gadmenthal.

Descending into the valley I passed through the alternate slips of light and shadow, crossed the river, and entering into the shade of the mountains beyond, commenced that ascent which was to continue with very little variation for several hours.

By the time I got within half a league of the Handeck and the Falls of the Aar, it was approaching nine o'clock. The sun shone full upon the snowy points of the mountains on both sides of the deep ravine up which I had long been toiling. I think I never saw tints of greater brilliancy opposed to each other than the deep blue of the sky, the reddish purple of the rocks, and the dazzling whiteness of the patches of snow above and among them.

At the châlet of the Handeck I threw off my burden for ten minutes, and after visiting the falls, of which I may say more some future day, proceeded to the last stage of the pass, and reached the hospital a little before noon, with no worse adventure than now and then a false step.

The gradation of natural scenery, from the smile to the grave, from the grave to the frown, and from the frown to the scowl, is well and distinctly marked in this Alpine pass.

In the Oberhaslithal and its little adjunct, the valley of Grund, the state of cultivation, the comfortable cottage, the village spire, the pastures with their cattle, all speak of man, not as the casual visitor, but as a part of that bountiful creation which the hand of God has lavished there.

Passing the hamlet of Hof, the traveller enters the forests. Their gloom, it is true, is diminished by his casually meeting with the woodman, or the scene of his labour, or still more agreeably by a green pasture chequered with cattle, their bells chiming at every step, and the summer habitation of their master; nevertheless, the scanty rugged path bespeaks man more as an intruder than the native of these wilds.

The flashing wave of the Handeck leaps down from a course through a still more forbidding region. The forest-tree will climb no higher, the pasture has vanished, not a *châlet* is to be seen; but above you rocks covered with eternal ice, and around you chaos and desolation. The most stupendous granite fragments lie hurled on every side, over which the torrent boils and foams, and between whose angles the devious and precarious footway is cautiously carried.

Yet even this frown is not without its softenings. The bright green herbage and dwarf shrub still cling to the masses of rock in the vicinity of the stream, and the bilberry and crimson flowers of the rhododendron still nod on their top. The gray and weather-stained rock is decked with numberless lichens of the most brilliant colours. The dizzy bridge still betokens the hand of man and the roughly-worn path his persevering step.

Then comes the episode of the Hospital, which we pass, and go to the summit. There all is waste and desolate. The damp, drowned moss, at times clothing in its decay the nakedness of the rocky pavement upon which you tread, is now all that remains of the verdure belonging to the earth. The track is ever confounded with the furrows worn on every

side by the torrents, and frequently, even in the height of summer, buried deep under the unmelted snow-drift.

From this stage rise rocks and mountains, upon whose precipitous and barren sides not a foot of earth can rest, and not a green blade sprout; on the slopes, and between the pinnacles of which, lies the frozen glacier; and whose hollows are levelled by the accumulated snows of centuries.

The hospital of the Grimsel * is not situated on the summit of the Pass, but in a sheltered situation about two miles below the highest point, at the edge of a small lake called the Kleinensee. It is properly one of those buildings instituted for the purpose of facilitating the passage of the mountain in bad weather, and as a place of refuge, where the passenger may find gratuitous entertainment and assistance.

Though by far the greater part of those who now pass the mountain are strangers, who pay for their entertainment, the master is still empowered to *faire la quête* throughout the neighbouring cantons for its support, and obliged, in case of distress, to assist the passenger gratuitously.

On my arrival, I came in for some bad wine and bread, but that sufficed; and returning instantly into the open air, I threw myself for an hour's repose upon the fine short turf which covers this little oasis.

I had not been long seated before I found a source of great amusement in a troop of my old friends, the goats, that came up from a lower part of the moun-

* Grimsel Hospital, 7,016 feet above the sea.

tain, where they had been browsing, to allow the goat-herd time for his dinner in the hospital. As they robbed me of the noontide nap I had thought to enjoy, I shall revenge myself by some further observations upon their habits and characters, which are in truth amusing enough.

They might be between fifty and sixty in number, and during their master's dinner were left, it appeared, pretty much on *parole*. This indulgence I cannot accuse them of abusing, at least in the first instance. They paced, for about ten minutes, backward and forward, over a small wooden bridge, led by their captain, a middle-sized goat, gifted by nature with a very formidable pair of horns. I was taken with his appearance, and found subsequently that he was no goat, but one of the few *steinbocks* still found in the higher alps, which had been taken and domesticated while young: the better reason why he should be considered a ruler in his own native wilds.

This amusement, however, soon changed. I have good reason to conjecture that the goat has an exquisite sense of that species of honour and dignity which is generally attached to elevated positions. One of the herd had found a kind of rocky protuberance in a small level plateau, and took formal possession. A second observed this, and, quitting the troop, jumped up too. So there they stood with their eight feet close together upon the small flat surface afforded by the rocky pedestal. This, however, soon became the object of envy to the rest, and by a simultaneous movement the whole herd rushed forward to the attack. A scene ensued which defies my powers of description. Of course it may be in-

ferred that, when the two first occupants were ousted and dethroned, the war raged with ten-fold violence for the honour of the succession—in short, they made such a clamour and scuffle, that the goat-herd came out with a great piece of bread in his mouth, and a stick in his hand, and drove them away from the stone of contention.

My own person then became an object of curiosity; for, not many minutes had elapsed before I was alarmed to see the whole herd coming at a hard gallop up the sloping bed of granite which led to my position. However, as they approached, they affected some respect or timidity, and after eyeing me for some time, the greater part began to browse, or to lie down in the immediate vicinity; while some of the younger and more inquisitive followed the dictates of female curiosity, by entering into a scrutiny of my accoutrements.

First, my feet, which hung over the edge of the fragment of turf-covered rock became the objects of speculation. Then three jumped up behind me, and I could perceive were very busily employed at the back of my hat and with my coat skirts. After a minute or so, I began to think it possible that if I did not give an eye to their operations, they might, perhaps, browse the rim of the former, or one of the latter, and therefore turned round. They meant no harm, poor things; all they wanted was to amuse themselves; and I am sure they made me forget how many leagues I had come, and how many more I had still to go, by the harmless entertainment they afforded me.

I made many observations upon their habits while lying in this pastoral state; but as they were proba-

bly more novel to me than they would be to my reader, I will finish the subject with only one remark ; that I could not but admire how exactly they agreed with my own species in this respect, that each fancied her neighbour's position and place of abode preferable to her own, and left no means untried to get possession of it.

There was a constant thumping either to the right or left of me from the one driving her hard forehead bounce against the eyes of another, to bring about this desired object ; till at last I got quite nervous, and began to think seriously how bad a chance I should run, if any of the individuals close to me were suddenly to forget the respect due to a stranger of another species, and drive her unfeeling forehead against mine, in sheer envy of the seat I was occupying.

But it is time I quit the Grimsel. A steep and disagreeable walk over an acclivity covered with large patches of snow in a melting state, brought me to the top of the pass ; and here, in pursuance of my plan, I was no longer to avail myself of the mule-path, which, traversing this mountain, forms the line of communication between the Canton of Berne and the upper Vallais, but to find a dubious, and, according to report, a difficult path-way over the side of the mountain to the eastward, to the glacier of the Rhone.

Bending therefore to the left, I kept the north side of a dismal looking lake ; and for half an hour remained in considerable doubt whether the direction I was taking over large beds of untrodden snow would lead me ultimately to the desired point.

However, having no choice, I kept steadily to my

first direction, and, after slipping and sliding about two miles, came suddenly upon the brink of a rapid declivity, at the ledge of which ran the track I had been so long in search of.

This I knew must be the Meyenwand, and a few minutes after, no shadow of doubt remained, as I came in sight of the glacier itself, and the Rhone, a small winding stream, flowing in the deep valley beneath me.

This noble glacier is an appendage to the Gallenstock, a high mountain, situated at the head of the Vallais; and near the point where the two great chains of the Helvetian and the Lepontine alps meet each other.

A long winding descent brought me upon the little foot-bridge that spans the Rhone shortly after its exit from the yawning cavern at the foot of the glacier; and after a careful survey of the surrounding country from this point, I fixed upon the track which I hoped would lead me in a couple of hours to the summit of the Furca.

I then began what proved a very long, and I must in truth add, a wearisome climb in the heat of the day. What made it more than usually trying was, my being every now and then attacked by some whispering doubts whether this were really the Furca upon whose side I was panting. However, my head was clear, I knew my direction, and in that, path or no path, I was determined to keep.

About four o'clock I arrived near the eastern brow*, commanding, from its elevation, a splendid view of the rocks and glaciers of the Finster-aarhorn,

* Pass of the Furca 8,300 feet above the sea.

the highest of the Berne chain, and many other points in its vicinity. A few minutes' further toil, and I passed the ridge over a bed of deep snow, and recognized far in the distance, over the secondary mountains, which had still to be traversed in descending into the Canton of Uri, the smiling vale of Urseren stretching towards the foot of the Gotthard.

This set my mind perfectly at ease. I soon cleared the snow-drift, and advanced to a small mossy eminence giving me an unobstructed view into the country below. Here I threw off my burden, opened my bosom to the fresh mountain wind, and sunk into the yielding couch which nature had spread even here for the weary.

There is something in the sudden and unexpected change from fatigue of body and mind, to perfect composure, and in the almost instantaneous subsidence of the thoughts from a state of restless and anxious activity to complete calm, which tends to shed a serious and chastened spirit over the mind and reflections. How little, thought I, as I began to feel the sweets of repose, how little do the busy crowds which swarm in the streets of the cities beneath me, know the luxury of a seat like this : how little the rapture inspired by the clear spring, or the start of thankfulness with which the crust of bread is put to the lips ! Who would not rejoice to be reminded of his dependence upon the bounty, providence, and mercy of God ; to feel, when far away from the crush and trammels of a state of society where man is too often tempted to forget it, that he is a creature dependent upon his Creator, and upon Him alone, for guidance and direction ; that from Him he has the breath of life, and strength, and health,

and reason, and that to Him he must look for their continuance? Many a time have I felt my heart glow with acknowledgment, and my eyes fill with tears, while bending over the clear spring, and soaking my hard crust, under a conviction of the infinite goodness of the Creator towards his creature, while I have a thousand times sat down unmoved, if not unthankful, to the plentiful provision which, though equally his gift, came more immediately from the hand of my fellow-mortal. And I have oftener felt the soul of devotion glow within me, for the unspeakable blessings of light, health, and reason, when solitary on the mountain-head, where there is nothing to build a wall between the God who gives and the creature who receives, than ever, with perhaps particular exceptions, in the assemblies of my species.

There is a spirit in these vast scenes of nature, where no handywork but that of God comes before the eyes, which speaks forcibly to the soul of that finite being around whose brief and temporal habitation they are spread. The state of that mind must indeed be unenviable which they cannot elevate, and prompt, for the time at least, to shake off the cares and the follies that distract it in the crowd; and those thoughts indeed debased, which cannot answer the impulse to flow in a purer and less impeded channel.

After musing came that vacancy which is often the consequence of too much excitement either of body or mind; my ideas became broken and confused: the mountains and glaciers, and the long drawn vista before me, were only seen at intervals, and at length quite lost; my consciousness of the torrent's murmurs became less distinct, and I believe I slept. I thought I heard the voices of laughing children,

and the chiming of bells : when, happily for me, as daylight was on the wane, the fall of footsteps upon the hardened snow awoke me. The two persons who had unwittingly done me this good office were peasants ; we greeted each other, and both passed on.

I soon got quite below the region of the snow, and upon the upper pastures of the mountains. Further down I overtook a chamois-hunter. He had been unsuccessful, but a poor simple-looking marmotte was hanging dead at his girdle. After some conversation, I gave him a glass of kirschwasser from my leathern bottle, and proceeded.

Immediately on setting foot upon the plain of Urseren toward the further extremity of which I hoped to find a bed, the first object I saw was a little chapel and decorated altar, which reminded me that I had now quitted Protestant Switzerland and entered the Catholic cantons.

A further and more convincing proof of this was afforded by the first step I made in the village of Realp, upon seeing a fat overgrown Capuchin friar, with his back posted against the wall of the church, as if to buttress it up, in close conversation with two lazy and miserable looking peasants.

At dusk I arrived at the sign of the Golden Lion, in Hospenthal, a village at the foot of the Gotthard ; and was welcomed by Mr. Müller, with that display of politeness and obsequiousness which tells you at once that the house is not yet full.

July 15th.—The valley of Urseren, which lies towards the uppermost extremity of the long and mountainous canton of Uri, is one of the most elevated among the Alps. It was in ancient times not

only independent of the government of Uri, but quite unattached to the Confederation binding the Forest Cantons in the country below, being dependent upon the abbot of the monastery of Disentis, in the Grisons. The inhabitants took upon them the responsibility of keeping open the pass into Italy over the St. Gotthard, and had many immunities in consequence. However, in this they were always readily assisted by the confederated cantons, whenever the rapacity and robberies of the Italian nobles made force necessary.

Between five and six in the morning I set off with the sun full in my face, and above me a sky of the most delicious blue it is possible to conceive.

Just below Andermatt, the largest village in Val d'Urseren, the river Reuss makes its escape through the well known defile, called the Schöllenen. This, with the Devil's bridge under which it precipitates itself, has been so often described by the pen and crayon of the traveller, that, as it yielded me no particular adventure, I shall pass quickly forward.

At Göschenen, a village situated at the opening of a valley to the left, a good carriage-road commences; and the vale of the Reuss becomes sufficiently wide to allow of some scanty cultivation on either side. The peasantry were occupied in housing their crops of hay; but made no scruple in laying down the rake and coming to the road-side to beg, at the approach of a stranger. The grasshoppers were astonishingly numerous, various, and loquacious; their song became towards the middle of the day quite tiresome, almost as much as the whine of the beggars. All the inhabitants of these valleys are zealous Catholics, even as their forefathers were.

It is a curious fact, however, in the history of the ancient confederacy binding the Forest Cantons, of which Uri was one, that the same independent spirit which revolted at the bare idea of yielding up their liberties to temporal sovereigns, prevented their exercising that blind and servile submission to the sovereign Pontiff, who arrogated to himself the spiritual government of the whole of Christian Europe. For when, about the commencement of the fourteenth century, the Pope thought proper to declare the Forest Cantons under the ban of excommunication, on account of the assistance given by them to King Lewis, one of the competitors of that period for the Imperial throne, the old Swiss boldly put this question to their priests—‘Whether they would continue to read the service and sing the litany as usual, or submit to instant banishment?’ Of course they chose the former alternative.

But this spirit is not to be looked for in their descendants. Uri is the poorest of the four Catholic cantons bordering the lake, and, as might be expected, the evil produced by the tenets and government of the church of Rome is more evident and less concealed than in the others. The eye meets everywhere with a fat thriving priesthood, and a miserable ragged population. I certainly do not exaggerate in stating that three-fourths of the individuals met with in one day’s ramble of eight or nine leagues in this valley, were beggars. This practice prevails, from the old silver-headed man and woman to the child who can scarcely walk or hold forth a hollow hand.

The cottages and their inhabitants seem equally poverty struck, and inconceivably dirty and miser-

able ; yet the churches and chapels are often splendidly decorated, and the clergy clothed with magnificence. The money which may be gained by the sweat of the peasant's brow, and the labour of his hands, (interrupted not only by the occasional fasts and festivals, but by almost daily attendance at the church at unseasonable hours), does not always go in the shape of food into their stomachs, or clothes upon their backs, but into the pocket of the well-fed priest, who no doubt knows its value. What should be spent in soap to wash their faces is preferably bestowed in speculation for the white-washing of their souls.

The Roman Catholic religion, setting aside weightier considerations, is no system calculated to improve either the moral or physical condition of a poor ignorant peasantry. The peasant is taught from his childhood, that the duty of a punctual and ceremonious observance of all the rites of his communion is far above that of decently providing for his family. He finds it easier to repeat his given number of set prayers in the splendidly tinselled temple, than to labour under a burning sun, and inclement sky, or in his wretched cottage. He finds it still more convenient to beg, which he does both from necessity and the love of idleness. And whence that idleness? Perhaps he had entered life with ideas of diligence and cleanliness, and went to his labour with an honest desire of providing for his family ; but finding that considered quite a secondary affair by those whom he respected as spiritual and temporal advisers ; that his hours for labour were continually broken in upon to his loss, by the frequent and imperative sound of the bell, he must gradually get a

distaste for what he cannot enjoy or reap the benefit of. May not we look to the same cause for nearly the same effects among the greater number of our poor priest-governed Irish peasantry?

The situation of Amstäg is particularly romantic, and that of Altorf, which I reached some time after, equally so. Altorf, the seat of government of the Canton, bears all the marks of a decaying and impoverished town: ruined houses meet the glance in every part, many of them, I doubt not, in the very same state in which they were left by the revolutionary army of 1797.

It is moving to see the once sheltering homestead laid open to all the winds of heaven; rafters, beams, and lattices all gone, and nothing but the bare and weather-stained walls remaining; yes, and probably the very remembrance of those who once were happy within it utterly lost from the face of the earth. But such are the traces which the iron wheels of war leave behind them. I remember once, in Germany, pausing in a wide plain over the site of what had once been a smiling village, but which, during the late wars, had totally disappeared from the landscape: nothing remaining but the village well, and some of the foundation stones of a single cottage. It was with a peculiar start of feeling that I discovered, among the tangled weeds which sprung about them, the wild and creeping branches of two vines, about a yard apart. They alone marked the former threshold!

Desolate and uninviting as Altorf appears, its history will always render it a point of interest.

William Tell was born at the village of Burglen, a few miles to the SE. of Altorf. One chapel is

built there to his memory, a second upon the Tellenplatte, on the lake of the Four Cantons, and a third at Küsnacht, where he shot Gessler. His portrait appears on almost every sign-post in the Canton.

After the death of Herman Gessler, Tell's name occurs only once in the history of his country; viz. in a record of a general meeting of the commune of Uri, in 1337, about thirty years after the events which have made his name and memory so popular. He is traditionally reported to have perished in an inundation which befel his native village when at an advanced age.

His male issue became extinct in 1684, and the female not till 1720. As might be supposed, many popular and fanciful tales are strung upon the thread of his history and achievements. Though a tower stands upon the spot where, according to the legend, Tell's little boy was placed against a tree with the apple upon his head, to await the adventurous shaft from his father's bow; that episode in his story, as well as others of a like nature, may be considered mere popular embellishments, as they have no sufficient evidence, either historical or traditional, to support them.

I arrived early in the evening at my night's lodging in the little port of Flüelen, watched the sun set over the glowing mirror before me, attended vespers, and went to bed.

July 16th.—A fine day in this part of my wanderings, viz. for the aquatic pilgrimage to the chapel of William Tell, to Rütli, and above all, for the ascent of the Righi, had been often the subject of my aspirations; and in having it granted to my

heart's content, I felt richly remunerated for the uncivil treatment I had received from the weather while among the Berne alps. On awaking, at an early hour, with the chime of the church bell for the matin prayer, seeing through my window the lake and mountains illuminated by the early rays of the sun, I felt no inclination to turn round for another nap, but dressing myself, breakfasted, and stepped into the boat which had meanwhile been prepared. My two boatmen pulled lustily at their oars, and the skiff glided swiftly over the unruffled surface of the lake under the shadow of the mountains on the east bank. After rounding several rocky head-lands at their feet, we approached the little cove where the water ripples upon the Tellenplatte, at the foundation of the chapel of William Tell.

There is something in the grandeur and magnificence of the scenes which surround you in this classic country, which gently, but irresistibly open the heart to a belief in the truth of the page upon which the events which have hallowed them are recorded. Whatever a man may think, and however he may be inclined to question the strength of the evidence upon which the relation of these facts rests, while in his closet, I should think there are but few sufficiently insensible and dogmatical to stand firm, and bar their hearts against the credulity which steals over them, while contemplating the spots themselves. You feel that those deeds and those events are in strict keeping with the scenes around you; and are precisely of the kind you would look for in the history of the country, whose stern and awful features are presented to your eyes. You feel that the air you breathe, the lofty moun-

tain pastures above you, those gloomy forests, the blue unfathomable lakes, and the sweet smiling valleys which ever and anon peep out from the deep recesses of the mountains, must indeed have nursed and cradled heroes. I own that this feeling was warm within me as our boat touched the rock.

The lime trees, whose graceful branches surrounded and partly shrouded the white walls and belfry of the chapel, were in full blossom. The wind scattered their rich perfumes upon the water. The air resounded with the hum of thousands of bees in motion among the foliage. From a pasture, high up the mountain above, burst the sweet and mellow catches of a female voice, singing the *kuh-reihen*; while the tinkling of the goat-bells was only heard when the gentle breeze freshened from the mountain side. Even then its force was hardly sufficient to disturb the image of the chapel with the surrounding trees and rocks, brightly delineated upon the water at their feet.

As soon as the boatmen laid down their oars they uncovered their heads, and I entered the little wicket of the chapel. It is built upon a rocky ledge, jutting out into the lake at the foot of the overhanging acclivities of the Axenberg, and lies quite open towards the water. All the events on record signalizing the struggle of the three original confederated Forest Cantons for their liberty in 1307-8, are blazoned in compartments upon the interior wall.

Once a-year the altar is adorned and prepared for the celebration of the mass, and a sermon is preached by a Capuchin friar to a large and picturesque assemblage of the peasantry, who come in their boats from the surrounding cantons.

On resuming my seat, we bore straight across the lake, for about three quarters of an hour, to the rocky cove below the field of Rütli.

Some short time before the intolerable tyranny of the Austrian bailiffs had driven William Tell to the act of vengeance which history imputes to him, this small strip of pasture, amongst almost inaccessible precipices and forests, had become the secret place of rendezvous of three men, Werner Stauffacher of Schwytz, Walter Fürst of Uri, and Arnold Melchthal of Unterwalden. They had here passed many nights, (November, 1307), in consultation how they might free their country from the yoke which had gradually become insupportable; and finally repaired hither at midnight, on the eleventh of the same month, each accompanied by ten friends chosen from their companions in their several cantons.

Their forefathers had prayed to God, when quitting their home in the north, that He would lead them to a land like that which they had possessed, where they might feed their flocks without fear of molestation or oppression; and had sworn, in His presence, never to forsake each other. The solemn oath was now repeated and renewed by their descendants, in the silence of the night, on a spot in the centre of that land to which God had conducted their fathers of old, and where He had granted and preserved to them that freedom which they agreed to maintain to the last gasp.

They resolved, with one voice, ‘ That in the enterprise upon which they now embarked, no one would be guided by his own private opinion—none forsake his friend: that they would jointly live and die with each other in defence of their common

cause: that each would, in his own vicinity, promote the object they had in view, trusting that the whole nation would one day have cause to bless this friendly union: that the Duke of Austria should be deprived of none of his lands, vassals, or prerogatives: that the blood of his servants and bailiffs should not be spilt: but that the freedom which they had inherited from their fathers, they were determined to assert, and to hand down to their children untainted and undiminished*.

Then Stauffacher, Fürst, and Melchthal stepped forward, and joining their right hands, raised the other to heaven, and swore by the name of God, that they would die in the defence of that freedom.

Rather more than a century after (1424), a deep solitude near Truns, in the Grisons, was, in the dead of the night, the scene of a like confederacy, among a number of noble and energetic men; and both the field of Rütli and the shade of the great sycamore-tree at Truns, were the birth-place of leagues which lasted for centuries.

Popular fancy has decorated the very identical spot of turf upon which the three Swiss took their memorable oath with a miracle, by splitting the water of a fine fresh spring rising in the little pasture into three small rills, and stating them to be perfectly distinct, and to have so issued forth immediately after that event. Of course I winked at the imposition, and mingled the water of all three, according to rule, before I put the tumbler to my lips.

From Rütli I still made use of the strength of my rowers to cross the lake once more to Brunnen, the

* Planta's Helvetic Confederacy, Vol. I, chap. vi. p. 153.

port of the canton of Schwytz. Here I betook myself to my usual mode of travelling, and proceeded leisurely through a most enchanting country to the town of Schwytz, situated among delightful meadows at the foot of the Mythen; and, after a brief halt at the church, continued my walk to the lake and village of Lowertz.

Though this canton is not free from beggars, the greater opulence of the inhabitants, and the richness of the country, throw a veil over many of the disagreeable traits of the professed form of religion; and even a zealous protestant must admit, that whether the old faith adds to the inward happiness and comfort of the peasantry or no, it adds much to the poetic character and picturesque colouring thrown over men and things in this delightful land.

Every part of the Forest Cantons which I have visited, affords numberless scenes for the pencil, of the most exquisite colouring and detail. Besides *that* interest which must always hang over a country rich in historical and traditional allusion, there is a peculiar character in the scenery, the style of architecture, the costume of the peasantry, and the appearance and habits of the people in general, which must strike every stranger.

Every where, on the public road, on the retired and lonely pathway, on the slope and on the summit of the mountain, the little decorated chapel, the crucifix, and oratory, are to be found; and you seldom meet with any of these so neglected, that a fresh garland or a small bouquet of wild-flowers has not been placed in the niche, at least within the twenty-four hours. Here you see the poor wandering beggar bending before them, with clasped hands and moving

lips; and there the more gaily attired but equally devout family of the richer peasants, passing from the town to their homestead in the mountains; the sturdy peasant with bended and uncovered head; the mother on her knees, one hand on her rosary and the other upon the little girl kneeling at her side, whose eyes and thoughts are wandering after the birds chirping in the overhanging foliage.

The village and lake of Lowertz, the diminutive islands, and castle of Schwanau, and the mountains around, form one of those simple pictures which are always gazed on with delight.

The N. W. end of the lake was filled up by the tremendous *éboulement* from the Rossberg *, September 7th, 1806, which overwhelmed the village of Goldau and other hamlets. It in a great measure choked up the valley between the lake of Lowertz and the town of Art. Its *débris* and the rent in the ridge and side of the mountain are still striking monuments of this convulsion.

While making my way, in the course of the afternoon, up the side of the Righi †, I fell in with a friendly family of burghers from Schwytz, who were going to the celebration of high mass in the convent of *Maria zum Schnee* upon the side of this mountain. The father had witnessed the fall of the Rossberg, and described its effect as terrific, even at the distance of Schwytz. It was announced by what seemed to be a sharp and isolated burst of thunder, shortly after which, the whole side of the mountain put itself in motion with a complication of the most hideous sharp and grating sounds, which

* The Rossberg, 4,958 ft.

† The Righi, 5,800 ft.

lasted some minutes after the scene of ruin was shrouded in a cloud of dust.

I parted with my companions at the gate of the monastery. It seemed very singular to me that they had been some dozen times to within half an hour's walk of a summit commanding one of the most extensive and astonishing views in Europe, and that their curiosity had never proved more potent than their devotion. But such was the case.

After securing a bed for the night at one of the inns near the summit, I strolled to several parts of the mountain during the earlier part of the evening. The number of visitors augmented every hour, and towards sunset all began to congregate on the highest point, where I did not fail likewise to take my stand.

The Righi does not owe its pre-eminence, as a point commanding perhaps the most splendid and varied view in Switzerland, to its height, but to its position, being the last considerable eminence towards the north in this part of the chain, and formed with very precipitous sides to the N. and E. while the gradual manner in which the back of the mountain inclines to the south—towards the central chain of the Alps, leaves the view unobstructed in that direction. Instances, where the height, position, and formation of a mountain are all equally favourable for an uninterrupted and extended view, are much rarer than might be imagined.

It would be presumption in me to attempt an analysis and description of the vast picture spread out before the eye of the spectator standing on its summit, or of the effects produced over the whole by the last oblique rays of a cloudless setting sun. It is truly bewildering.

Little by little the infinity of objects scattered over the scene below became more and more indistinct; and, soon after the sound of the vesper-bell, rising from innumerable chapels and villages, had ceased to strike upon the ear, the lakes in the immediate vicinity were alone distinguishable, gleaming 'misty and gray,' at a depth which the eye grew weak in attempting to measure.

July 17th.—Some time before day-light, I was not sorry to be roused from a very uncomfortable bed, in which I had enjoyed but little rest, thanks to the good men and maidens who had kept up a dance over my head to the scraping of a vile fiddle. This never ceased from the moment I lay down till after midnight, and was a sorry kind of preparation for the high mass in the convent to which all were wending.

I took the road to the highest point, called the Righi-Culm, just as the twilight began to steal over the slope of the mountain, following or passing several straggling parties repairing to the same point. The summit was already occupied by a considerable crowd, which by sunrise had amounted to nearly two hundred, consisting of individuals of many different nations, as well as of most of the neighbouring cantons. It was indeed a motley assemblage.

The mass of indiscriminate nature beneath us gradually unfolded itself; the stars faded from the sky; one prominent object after another in the vast extent of country beneath started into shape and distinctness from the gray surface; and gradually the lakes, woods, mountains, and rivers became distinguishable. Then the white chapels, and towns, and hamlets, sprinkled among them, began to glisten

in the twilight ; till by the time the first yellow sun-beam glimmered upon the peaks of the Finster-aarhorn and his brethren, the whole of this astonishing scene lay distinct, though cold and in shade, before our eyes. The eastern horizon brightened more and more, the eminence upon which we stood next became illuminated, and the sunlight stole gradually downward towards the vast scene at our feet. It was a spectacle such as defies all description, and which a man may deem himself favoured to have been permitted to behold.

Shortly after the sun had fairly and fully illumined the whole of the landscape, I began my descent to Küsnacht. The bells from innumerable chapels were sounding as I descended the steep northern side of the mountain, and parties of gaily-dressed peasants were moving in every direction in obedience to the summons.

Near Küsnacht, I visited the third chapel erected in memory of Tell, at the spot where he shot Herrman Gessler. The road leading to it is still the 'hollow-way.'

The subsequent continuation of my ramble from Küsnacht to Lucern, along the border of the lake, and thence over the country to Winkel, a village on one of the many branches of the same, though delightful in the extreme, offered nothing sufficiently novel or striking to claim a place among my recollections. Here I took a boat to carry me to Alpnach in Unterwalden. The castle of Rozberg, on the eastern shore of the lake of Alpnach, is remarkable as the scene of the first attempt made by the patriots of Rütli in their enterprising project for the deliverance of their country. This was one of the castles held by the prefects of the Dukes of Austria, and

had been shortly before consigned to the keeping of Wolfenschiess, an Unterwaldner, who, corrupted by the Duke, had become the oppressor of his countrymen. He had shortly before fallen a victim to the just vengeance of Conrad Baumgarten, whom he had injured.

A custom, still prevalent through a great part of Switzerland, upon which even the vaunted morality of the present day has had but little influence, viz. the nightly visit of the lover to his betrothed, was taken advantage of, as is well known, to gain possession of this castle, in the first hours of Jan. 1, 1308. And the successful issue of this first attempt was followed by a series of simultaneous movements throughout the Forest Cantons, which, by their complete success, in the course of twenty-four hours, entirely put down the undue and tyrannical power of the Dukes of Austria; and restored these hardy mountaineers to a full enjoyment of their original and enviable freedom: a freedom, which by the assistance and permission of the God whom they worshipped, and in whom they confided, they were enabled to vindicate and to preserve for centuries.

From the landing place I took the taper spire of the church of Alpnach for my guide and soon entered that village. After depositing my knapsack, &c. in the small auberge, I entered the porch of the church. The afternoon service was just concluding; five priests magnificently attired were making their final set of genuflections at the high altar. The organ was concluding the service with a few desultory chords, and the white smoke from the censers hovered about the roof and upper flight of windows for exit.

After the service was concluded, and the good Unterwaldners dispersed, I undertook a more leisurely

survey of the church, paintings, sculpture, and gilding, which are all in very good taste, and the plaster imitation of various marbles, of a beauty, hardness, and polish exceeding any thing I had ever seen. The only object which struck me as in bad keeping with the general design and appearance of the church was the small organ, which, painted like a snuff box, made but a sorry figure in the large organ gallery.

It appeared to me to have been a high day for the Virgin; for her effigy, in the form of a great doll dressed *à la mode*, had been brought forth, placed upon a moveable stand, and evidently carried about in procession. However, it soon appeared that her day was at an end; for, while I was standing beside the high altar, in comes the sacristan or some other officer attached to the church. He advanced unceremoniously up to the figure, unstrapped her from the pedestal, and then inserting his hand between her shoes, (one of which I had seen a woman kiss a few minutes before), unscrewed a peg which kept her upright, let her fall upon his shoulder, and carried her pick-a-back out of the church into the vestry: so that the figure which one moment was deified, and prayed, and hymned to, and not approached even by the consecrated priest without reverence, was the next taken on the back of the unsanctified valet and shut up in a dark box.

On returning to the village inn to reclaim my travelling equipage, I found the entrance, passage, tap, and bed-room all crowded with peasants in their shirt sleeves, just as they had come out of church. Instead of *bete für uns!* (Pray for us!) *beer!* was now the universal cry; and all without exception seemed to agree, by the eagerness with which they seized their mugs, that the mass had been dry work.

My road now led me into the vale of Sarnen. I passed early in the evening through the town of that name, situated at the lower extremity of the lake of Sarnen, and soon after came to the village of Sachslen, on its eastern shore, where I intended to take up my quarters for the evening and night.

Sachslen is a delightful village. The walls of its large and handsome church are covered with votive offerings to the saint whose bones lie, but do not repose, under the great altar. The body of Nicholas von der Flüe, a brave warrior, and what is more, a good man, who in evil times saved the Confederacy the shame of dissolution from civil dissensions, by his sudden appearance in the Hall of Diet at Stanz, and by his exertions and success as a peace-maker, was brought after death from his hermitage, and buried here. If the blest could sorrow, he would sorrow grievously at the honour taken from his God and bestowed upon his memory.

I have said he was laid, but did not repose, in his tomb; for his skeleton is continually raised out of the vault by machinery, and shewn to strangers, garnished with rings and jewels.

Englishmen, who are accustomed to no mode of greeting in their own country, but the dry and unmeaning, *How do you do!* cannot fail to be struck with the simple and patriarchal modes of salutation in the Swiss-German Cantons.

In the Canton of Berne, high and low, rich and poor exclaim when they meet you, *Gott grüss 'euch* (God salute you)—*Gott behüte euch* (May God shield you), or *Guten abend geb' euch Gott* (May God give you a good evening). In the Forest Cantons, a mode of greeting yet more striking is usual; the one touches his cap, and exclaims *Gelobt sey Jesus Christus*

(Jesus Christ be praised), to which the other responds, *In ewigkeit. Amen!* (For ever and ever. Amen)! These are the relics of simple and delightful days, which are but too quickly fading away, even amongst the mountains.

But above all, one thing in this, as well as most other Roman Catholic countries, has pleased and delighted me; a peculiarity which, I think, it was not necessary, in laying aside Popery, to lay aside also: I mean the perfect liberty, which there exists, to enter the house of God at all times. Whoever you may be, His temple is always open, and His altar free to be the place of your supplication. I am sorry that this is not the case amongst Protestants; and that there are those amongst us, to whom the sanctity of a building consecrated to the worship of God, would be no protection from insult and spoliation. The Roman Catholic places of worship contain moveables of far greater value than the simplicity of our forms admits of; yet no one stands by to watch, while the poor muleteer, or the more wretched travelling beggar, walks in to his devotions alone and unquestioned. If it must be so, let the beadle be there to watch; but let there be no bars and bolts between the sinner and the sanctuary.

July 18th.—A morning's walk over the Kaisers-tuhl, by the blue and elevated lake of Lungern, and finally over the Brünig, of which line of route more may be said at a second visit, brought me early in the afternoon to my old quarters at Meyringen. My good hostess, her myrmidon Susiekäteli, and even old one-eyed Tom, all seemed glad to see me; and I took possession of my former apartment again for a couple of days.

CHAPTER IV.

“ The hills and mountains raised from the plains,
The plains extended level with the ground,
The ground divided into sundry veins,
The veins enclosed with rivers running round;
These rivers making way through nature’s chains
With headlong course into the sea profound;
The raging sea beneath the vallies low,
Where lakes, and rills, and rivulets do flow:

* * * * *
All these, and many more of his creation,
That made the heavens, the *wanderer* oft doth see ;
Taking therein no little delectation,
To think how strange, how wonderful they be,
Framing thereof an inward contemplation,
To set his heart from other fancies free ;
And whilst he looks on these, with joyful eye,
His mind is rapt above the starry sky. ”

July 20th.—I cannot remember that it was ever my lot to travel over seven leagues of country twice, with such an exact similarity between times, lights, weather, and circumstances, as happened to me in my first and second passage of the Grimsel from Meyringen to the hospital.

I left Meyringen at the same hour, laden in the same manner ; passed the valley of Grund with the same exquisite display of light and shade ; the Handeck, in the same glow of sunshine ; and arrived at the hospital of the Grimsel about the same hour, more than ever enchanted with the many and peculiar beauties of this fine Alpine pass. The whole of the defile leading up from the valley of Grund to the

ridge of the Grimsel, a distance of about sixteen or eighteen miles, may be described as a deep channel, sunk between the gigantic flanks of the two continuous ridges of the Alps, running from SSE. to NNW. Numerous torrents of great impetuosity, rolling from the icy pinnacles and wastes among the mountains on either side, pour down into this ravine, augmenting the volume of the Aar, and bringing with them vast accumulations of rock and stone from the slopes and higher grounds. The constant recurrence of these streams; the occasional obstruction of free passage in the bottom of the valley by rocky projections at the foot of the mountains round which the river alone finds a narrow and encumbered channel; the forests in the lower part of the pass, and the labyrinth of shivered rock in the upper, give to the winding and narrow footway leading up to it the most singularly savage and varied character it is possible to conceive.

Midway between Grund and the Grimsel lies the small and lonely village and church of Guttannen at the height of 3,400 feet above the sea.

The fall of the Aar, at the Handeck, should not be passed a second time, without a few lines descriptive of its peculiar features. To this wild cascade, whose loud commotion is heard long before you enter the forest through which it has delved a passage, I give the preference above all the falls I have hitherto seen in Switzerland. The great rush of water, and the deep, narrow and perpendicular chasm into which it is precipitated, give it a character much more in unison with the scenery around it, than either the Staubbach or Reichenbach can boast of.

Just after they take the leap, the waters of the

Aar mingle in the descent with a powerful stream, which comes dashing through the forest on the left, and plunges into the same horrible abyss. Upon this 'war of waters' the rays of the sun shot down with an almost insufferable brightness; and the beautiful Iris rising, expanding, and falling with the draught of white spray thrown up from below, was seen to perfection on both my first and second visit. The average force of this fall has been computed at 100,000 horse power.

On mentioning to the vacher at the châlet of the Handeck the idea I had entertained of finding my way over the pass and glacier of the Gries into the Val Formazza, in preference to the more ordinary route into Italy over the Gotthard; he told me, that I might find myself indifferently off for proper shelter and accommodation, as there were no creditable places of entertainment in any of the remote vallies descending from the Alps, till I should reach Crevola, or even Domo d'Ossola. However, if I persevered and found it practicable to cross the Gries and reach the village of Formazza, he would advise my inquiring for and making use of his name to one *Pedlar William*, who, he assured me, was a trusty man, and would either give me a lodging himself, or at any rate procure me a more creditable one than that which a suspicious kind of cabaret could afford. I thought a friend in need was a friend indeed; so, carefully noting down the address of the pedlar, and thanking the Handecker for his good will, I exchanged the ordinary greeting, and continued my route to the hospital. Hence, after brief sojourn, I made for the summit: and leaving my former route to the glacier of the Rhone to the left, fol-

lowed the mule-path, three leagues over the southern declivity of the mountain to Obergesteln, the highest village in the Vallais.

About three o'clock in the afternoon I approached the scattered hamlet, and immediately held a consultation with myself, whether I should make a halt here or not. But two alternatives presented themselves, either to stay here quietly for the rest of the day and ensuing night in any kind of lodging I could find; or to push on eight leagues further over the Gries to Formazza that very evening. On counting the hours of daylight still remaning, I thought I might venture a forced march; besides, former experience whispered in my ear that fair weather was not to be trifled with. This settled, I had of course no time to lose; therefore, after glancing back for a moment at the Gallenstock, which rose high into the blue air above the source of the Rhone, I crossed the small bridge over the latter, and passing through Obergesteln, reached the entrance of the Eginenthal leading up the Gries.

I then began my ascent, following a track on the left side of the stream, and which brought me, after between two and three hours' weary climb through a desert and sterile valley, within sight of the head of the pass, and the glacier which had still to be crossed, soaring above me at an elevation which made me half dread that I had chalked out too great an undertaking if not for my strength of body, at least for the daylight which yet remained. I had met with no living creature since I entered the Eginenthal, and had to put up with one or two unpleasant checks in my ascent, from having crossed the stream flowing through, too low down, and conse-

quently having had to drag myself over a very fatiguing tract of loose broken ground, before I could repass it, and regain the ordinary line of the pathway. Besides, I felt faint for want of nourishment, and from having drawn upon my strength a little too largely during the hottest part of the day. However, nothing was to be done but to press forward courageously. I rested my shoulders for five minutes before a picturesque bridge thrown over the stream, and then passing it, continued my route. A few minutes after, I turned an abrupt ledge of rock which had long bounded my view up the glen; and I shall never forget the invigorating thrill of pleasure which ran through every limb, when I descried before me a little green plain, lying snug and sheltered at the foot of the Gries; with two small clumps of *châlets*, and between sixty and seventy head of cattle standing about them, and heard the sweet chime of their bells mingling with the gay voices of the peasants who were employed in milking them.

A bowl of new milk, and a quarter of an hour's chat with the friendly and light-hearted peasants, gave me renewed strength and courage; and looking up at the dingy masses of snow, rock, and ice, above me, I thought, if I could only get past the perils of the waste of snow and ice before sunset, I would find a night's lodging where I might, and be satisfied.

Entering upon this final ascent, I followed some kind of track, repeatedly lost and found among the large drifts of half melted snow, and the ragged channels worn in the earthy slopes by the torrents. The climb proved long and fatiguing, and not unattended with peril, from the faithless nature of the

footing afforded by snow undermined by rivulets and the water filtering through it in every direction. At length I stepped upon the edge of the glacier which occupied the ridge of the pass.

The surface was tolerably level in the part where I traversed it, covered with fresh snow to a considerable depth, and with few but deep and narrow clefts, through which was heard the sound of water running in the vaults beneath. To the right the glacier was broken into ten thousand fantastic and shapeless masses, with deep blue chasms between them.

The direction I had to follow was now indicated less by the track or footsteps of my predecessors, (which, in these elevated regions are soon obliterated by the action of the sun, rains, or recent snow), than by tall poles stuck into the ice at distances of several hundred paces from each other. Many of these had been blown down and lay half-buried in the snow, and such I thought it my duty to raise and fix again, that the next solitary wanderer might not be destitute of that assistance for which I felt so truly grateful.

The crest* of the pass took me about half an hour to traverse. When about midway between the two declivities, the scene which presented itself was sufficiently novel to make me pause a moment. I was far above the level of all symptoms of vegetation. On either hand the various snowy summits of the ridge rose from the bosom of the glacier, which stretched too far to the N. and S. to allow me the least glimpse of the deep valleys in those

* The Gries 7,900 feet.

directions, or of the pleasant and verdant slopes of the mountains surrounding them.

But directly over the dazzling white plateau on which I stood, I descried, far in the distance, the many towering summits of the great chain of Berne Alps sparkling in the setting sun; and to the south, various points of the chains at the head of the Levantine, and other vallies diverging from this point.

When I gained the southern edge of the glacier, I saw below me the commencement of the precipitous descent into the four small valleys of Bettelmatt, Kehrbächi, auf der Frutt, and Frutval, alternating with very rapid and long descents: all of which I must traverse, before I could hope to see Formazza.

Upon this last, but not least fatiguing division of my day's pilgrimage, I entered with pretty good spirits.

I was content to have made good my passage of the ridge, and to suppose my future path too clearly pointed out by the nature of the ground to allow of much doubt.

Meanwhile, night was fast approaching, and a mass of pale coloured clouds, rising to the south, began to shew symptoms of the nature of its burden, by occasional broad and vivid flashes. Formazza was still very far distant; and I must confess, that the frontiers of Italy, however they might awaken my 'classic raptures' in broad day light, did not make me particularly in love with the idea of passing a night amongst wilds, where the character of the peasantry was not the most encouraging.

I could not help feeling, that however unsuspectingly and fearlessly I could lay down my head

under the roof of the Swiss mountaineer, it was not a matter of equal nonchalance to do it among the lawless inhabitants of the frontier, who, if clean-handed themselves, were many of them the children of parents to whom the commission of crime had been a light matter.

Nevertheless, I kept steadily in motion. The shadow of the mountain began to fall deeper upon the narrow defile through which I was making my way, and one star after another began to gleam from the sky. I determined to go forward as long as I could distinguish the next step in advance. My path could scarcely be more rugged than it had been for hours, and might possibly become smoother.

After descending the first two great declivities, I set foot upon a little plain, at the further extremity of which I could distinguish the bleached roofs of a number of cottages; and thought for a moment, that, if I could find shelter here, I would not be fastidious, but accept it, however rude and uninviting. I was surprised on approaching them to see no smoke rising from any of the roofs, nor any other sign of life in their precincts; and still more, on crossing the footbridge over the stream of the Toccia, or Tosa, upon whose margin I had been walking for some time, to find the whole hamlet perfectly uninhabited, though consisting of nearly thirty houses, and as desert as though the plague had been there.

A feeling, and I may say a disagreeable feeling of my complete loneliness now lingered on my mind and spirits for a few minutes, although I had the whole day been passing, in silence, through the most profound solitudes, where a human face is seldom to be seen.

A second hamlet about half an hour's walk further down was exactly in the same deserted state.

By this time the night had fairly set in; though the constant flare thrown out by the clouds in front, unaccompanied by any thunder, afforded sufficient light to keep me in the rugged and precipitous pathway.

I was now on the left bank of the Tosa, whose increasing rapidity, and a hollow murmur in the distance, intimated my approach to the great fall bearing its name. This soon gave place to a loud rumble, which swelled upon the gentle breeze coming up the valley, and overpowered the gurgling and dashing of the water in my immediate vicinity. A little white-walled chapel, perched at the edge of the descent on the left side of the fall, next came in view; and I was soon occupied in picking my way down the winding foot-path which it overtops. I could spare but few glances upon the torrents which boiled over the edge of the precipice at my side as I descended; having sufficient difficulty in keeping my precarious footing among the rough fragments of stone strewed over the path. But when once arrived in safety at the foot of the long declivity, and on less awkward ground, I came to a halt, threw off my knapsack to give a moment's ease to the blister which the heat of the preceding day and the constant friction for so many hours had raised upon my back, and sat down upon a rocky fragment to have what enjoyment I might of my nightly visit to this remote and rarely-seen cascade.

The lightning, which had for some time past covered the southern sky with one incessant glow of brilliant light, threw its blue glare every instant

upon the white and slowly-descending wreaths of foam in which the volume of water came bursting over the sloping precipice from a height of between 400 and 500 feet.

The form of the cataract is nearly triangular, spreading out very wide towards the foot; and its peculiar beauty is in a great measure derived from the descent not being perpendicular, the inclined and rugged face of the precipice fretting its waters into one unbroken and snow-white sheet of foam from top to bottom.

The body of water brought down by this fall is, I believe, only exceeded in this romantic country by the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen, which are as much greater in volume, as they are inferior in height.

I shall remember the singular circumstances under which I saw the cascade of the Tosa, when the dripping weather at the Staubbach, and the glowing sunshine of the Handeck, have alike passed from my memory.

With the hoarse music of the fall still sounding in my ears, I once more resumed my pilgrimage. A maze of huge fragments of rock, to whose headlong descent from the mountain above, the echoes of the valley have resounded in some long-forgotten hour, ushered me shortly after into a dark pine forest, through which I toiled with many a moment of obscurity, the fainter flashes hardly affording me sufficient twilight to trace the footway. However, before I emerged, my eye was attracted by a thin stream of light gleaming athwart the tall leafless stems of the pines, and by the time I came into freer air, other lights in the same direction announced my approach

to an inhabited village. This proved to be Formazza, which I entered about eleven o'clock, after repassing to the right bank of the river. I mounted the steps of the first cottage I came to, and inquired for Pedlar William. I was stared at, but attended to, by a peasant who shewed me his cottage. After long knocking, a head was protruded from a lattice, and I was asked what I wanted. This was soon explained. But, alas! Pedlar William and his family were snug in bed; and he sent me word by his son, that His most paternal majesty, Charles Felix, by the grace of God, Duke of Savoy and King of Sardinia, had forbidden him, Pedlar William, to harbour strangers, and that I had better bend my way to the only house where it was permissible to receive them. There was no alternative; so, wishing Pedlar William good night and his Sardinian Majesty better advisers, I found my way to the royal place of entertainment. I cannot say that my first impressions were in favour of the house. On entering, I found three men at supper in the kitchen; and after some demur, my question, whether I could have shelter and refreshment for the night, was answered in the affirmative. I was shewn an upper room with two gigantic dingy looking beds in it. Every part of it was disgustingly filthy. The furniture consisted of a table and a chair, and neither the window nor the door would shut. Now, to tell the honest truth, my spirits and imagination were rather upon the alert. I had taken it into my head that my entertainers were not the most creditable, and in some measure the warning of the Handecker chimed in with the impressions produced upon my mind by the manners of those among whom I was thrown: and I might

go on to give a romantic detail of the circumstances which kept my suspicions awake. However, as my reader might eventually feel disappointed to find that I was neither poisoned, pistoled nor stillettoed myself, nor instrumental in making away with others in self-defence, I will at once cut the night's adventure short, by stating, that, after having found a refuge from ill fare, suspicion, and wretchedness in several hours of unbroken sleep, I met with no obstacle to my crossing the threshold for the prosecution of my journey at early morning.

The evening's menace of storm had, it seemed, passed off without producing any bad effect upon the state of the weather; and the bright sunshine and fresh air were additional inducements for me to quit my abominable quarters, which appeared to still less advantage by daylight.

The continuation of my route down the banks of the Tosa, through Val Formazza and Val Antigorio, is marked in my recollection as abounding with the most exquisite scenery.

The savage grandeur of the deep defiles, down which the river takes its passage in the former, and the delicious region through which it rolls in the latter valley, cannot be painted in too glowing colours. In these high valleys, fully exposed to the power of the summer sun, there is truly a 'blending of all beauties.' The vine, the fig, and the broad-leaved chesnut, and other proofs of the luxuriance of the soil of Italy, present themselves every where to the eye, intermixed with the gray blocks resting on the flanks, and at the feet of the high granite ridges, out of whose recesses you have not as yet escaped. Instead of the weather-stained and simple habitation

of the hardy Vallaisan, sheltered by the bleak belt of forest, upon which alone I had glanced yesterday, I now saw on the southern declivity of the same range the substantial Italian structure, with its regular outline, and simple yet beautiful proportion, and the villa, the handsome church, or the stone cottage surrounded by its girdle of vines. The vine, not in its stiff and unpicturesque Swiss or Rhenish dress, but the true vine of Italy and of poetry, flinging its pliant and luxuriant branches over the rustic viranda, or twining its long garland from tree to tree.

Yesterday I had before me the rough-featured, but manly peasant of the Alps ; and to-day the dark skin, finely formed traits, the speaking, but sinister glance of the Italian. Long before I reached Crevola, alpine botany had, in a great measure, disappeared, and another succeeded.

I wandered among fields of Indian corn, with its broad leaf and flowering top ; the air in many of the close lanes between the villages was loaded with the delicious perfume of the cyclamen, which allured me by thousands in the hedge-bottoms. The little shrines which bordered the foot-path from time to time, multiplied in the vicinity of the villages ; and many of the latter have very handsome and spacious churches.

At Credo, the principal village in Val Antigorio, I made a momentary halt before a large bone-house, with the motto *Mors ubique* over the door-way ; and cast an amused eye on the regular rows of fancifully disposed bones and skulls in its interior. They had been all carefully white-washed, and the inner wall was decorated with a most appalling representation of the pains of purgatory. As I saw the church was

open, I walked in, and for a few moments contemplated one of those beautiful scenes which you are constantly stumbling upon in a Roman Catholic country. A party were engaged at one of the side-altars, and it appeared to me that the sacrament of baptism had just been administered. The mother, clothed from head to foot in a long white veil, was kneeling with her husband at the feet of an aged priest. The infant lay asleep in its cradle on the pavement, close at the mother's side; while an elder child, apparently about two or three years old, was toddling about the church, and scrambling on all fours up the steps of the high-altar, with every sign of pleasure and astonishment at the sight of the finery with which it was covered.

After a long morning's walk, I arrived, by way of Ponte Maglio and St. Marco, at Crevola, and joined the great road over the Simplon, just as it passes over the well-known bridge under which the streams from Val Vedro escape into the plain to unite with the Tosa.

A perfectly straight line of route now conducted me to the town of Domo d'Ossola, where I took up my quarters for the rest of the day and the ensuing night.

The evening was spent with my sketch-book on the Monte Calvario and its environs; and what my further route should be—I left for the morrow's dawn to decide.

The sultriness of the air during the earlier part of the night seemed to take away the power of unbroken repose, and I was perhaps on that account the more inclined to leave my uneasy couch, when, after midnight, I became conscious, by the glimmer on the

wall, that the thunder-storms, of which we had had a portion during the preceding days, were still sailing over the mountains.

A gently inclined roof upon which the windows of my chambers opened, offered too great a temptation to be resisted; and taking a cushion out with me I seated myself in the open air. It was a calm, star-light night. Profound silence rested on the town; here and there a faint light glimmered from a lattice; and one very bright and white spark rested upon the ascent of the Monte Calvario. The outlines of the surrounding mountains were scarcely definable, except towards the SE., where the distant and elevated ridge came almost momentarily into harsh relief from the bright blue glare, which shot and quivered and gleamed from behind. Ever and anon, a distant rumble came swelling on the wind from the same direction; else the faint lulling murmur of the Tosa passing through the plain was the only sound audible in the intervals.

After maintaining my position about an hour and a-half, my eyes got weary of gazing fixedly at the spot, where, after making a small circuit, the storm seemed to remain stationary and to spend itself. The flashes had become fainter and less frequent, and at last appeared to cease altogether. Yet one more!—It came, quivering for an instant behind the ridge, and then left me in utter darkness.

I now crept back into my chamber and enjoyed some kind of broken rest, till between three and four o'clock, when a tap at my door again roused me.—I had given the waiter his orders the evening before, that, in case I felt in the humour, I might start in good time. The morning had not yet dawned, but

still I felt refreshed and ready to begin another day.

Accordingly, after a slight breakfast—for, unfortunately for the traveller, a good appetite cannot always be bespoken at that early hour,—I recommended the care of my knapsack to the Swiss landlord, till I should return to claim it, and walked out of the inn-gates just as the day began to dawn.

The earliest matin-bell was ringing on the Monte Calvario, and in the cloisters at its foot, as I rounded the knoll which connects it with the suburb: the next turn in the road brought me in sight of the town of Villa, two or three miles distant, at the termination of a perfectly straight and level line of road.

Such a road is my abhorrence, either in the English fens, on the plains of Germany or France, or in the Italian valleys. Nevertheless, there was much at this early hour to take my attention from its wearisome length, and my eyes from the high and narrow quadrangular tower which bounded it. The delicious sun-shine gradually descended the mountains which surrounded me, lighting up, one after the other, the white convents, and churches, and villas, and cottages, with which their broken sides are every where enlivened. From the vineyards on either side the road, and the pathways leading to the various hamlets, many of the peasantry issued as the day advanced, bending beneath large baskets of ripe fruit for the supply of the market of Domo d'Ossola. There was the village lass leading her solitary cow or goat to gather its day's nourishment from the grassy edge of the road, with her distaff stuck in her girdle, and her hands ever busy with the thread; so that, what with the amusement

afforded me by one thing or another, I entered and passed through the dirty town of Villa without ennui.

Two long stretches of straight and level road, bordered with thickets, brought me to the bridge over the Tosa, now a stream of very considerable magnitude. I then kept close under the shadow of the mountain on the left bank, till I reached that part of the road beyond Premosella and Vogogna, where I expected to find a foot-path still closer to the western edge of the vale, to the village and lake of Mergozzo.

It happened, there were several bends to the left, and I was in great doubt which to take. Just at that moment an old woman most opportunely hove in sight, advancing along the road at some distance; and I thought it prudent to await her approach before I decided the point. I accordingly seated myself upon one of the edging-stones, which are a peculiar feature of this great military road. During the interval of inactivity which followed, I mused rather dolefully upon my deficiency in the language of the country. My stock of French and German was here of no use, for, though the first was current coin in the inns, I did not suppose it would pass with the ancient sibyl approaching.

Poco non allegro, said I to myself, *Volti subito, Allegretto non troppo*, that is nearly all the Italian I am perfect master of, and out of that I can cobble no sentence to make the old lady know what I want to consult her about, twist and twine and intertwine it as I may. She approached—the case became urgent, and I determined to make an effort. Placing myself opposite one of the turnings, as she came close up to me, I elevated my pole, then placed

it horizontally, pointing down the foot way, and exclaimed with raised eye-brow and inquiring tone, *Via per Mergozzo?* *Si, Signor*, returned she. I instantly took that direction, wonderfully contented with my success, and noting down the words and action as a formula, which was often made use of in the sequel.

The heat of the day, for it was now between nine and ten o'clock, was rapidly augmenting, and I felt the comfort as well as the charms of the footway, for which the heat and white dust of *la grande route* had been exchanged. It lay, for the most part, through the vineyards, and under the high espaliers, over which leaves, tendrils, and green fruit were thickly spread. Now and then a small and dirty village had to be passed, and the wide and sterile beds of mountain torrents, which, though perfectly dry in the summer, descend from the precipitous mountains in the winter with an impetuosity which would cause serious damage, if the peasant did not respect their utmost limit, and avoid throwing away his labour upon the ground situate within it.

Plantations of hemp, Indian corn, and fig-trees, covered the ground in the vicinity of the hamlets; and, still closer to the rocky foot of the mountain, the shade was yet more grateful, from the thick foliage of the chesnut, which is the pride of the soil of Italy. About eleven, I came in sight of the village and lake of Mergozzo, deeply sunk between two elevated and woody ridges, and connected with Lago Maggiore by a canal.

In this village my person became the bone of contention between two boatmen. I could not understand the quarrel; but it was just as violent, thea-

trical, and grimacious, as I could have imagined ; and though I was under no alarm that bloodshed, which both appeared to menace, would really take place, yet, judging that they would probably settle their difference by agreeing to cheat me, I relinquished the idea I had for a moment been induced to entertain, to take a boat here to the Borromean islands, and giving both the slip, left them to fight it out at their leisure. I rounded the left side of the lake to the canal, and soon after entered Palanza.

The scenery of Lago Maggiore, and its superb islands, has been so often and so fully described, that I feel there is nothing for a passing wanderer like myself to add. I look back upon my tranquil passage of its waters, and the delicious scenery which I then saw spread around me, as a summer day's dream in the midst of a day's toil. It was indeed too sweet to last.

I landed at Laveno, and after undergoing scrutiny at the bureau de police, set forward towards Varese.

Four hours' walk, under a cloudless sun, in the hottest time of the day and of the year, I found to be no trifling matter. Indeed, I must own I had for some days back felt some kind of exhaustion creep over me in the course of the afternoon, less in consequence of the distance passed over, than from the inadequacy of a slight meal taken at a very early hour, to carry me through the exertion of a whole day's march, especially under the burning heat of such a sun. Still, a repast in the middle of the day is a bad speculation for a pedestrian, and I was not so much in love with inns as to turn in for the sole reason that there happened to be one at the road side.

When the body is feeble the mind has often a tendency to be depressed likewise. As I trudged along under the steep declivities of a range running from Lago Maggiore to the eastward, where the sun had full play for its beams, with eyes smarting from the white dust of the road, I mused upon my wild neck-or-nought scamper over the Italian frontier with less pleasure than ever before or since. I looked back with some kind of anxious feeling towards those two fearful chains of mountains which were now interposed between me and all the friends I possessed on earth. I recollected how many minutes there had been in my solitary passage of these, when I had had full employment for all the strength and elasticity of body and mind I could muster; and reflected, with some degree of awe, that all this would have to be fought over again, before I could once more see a friendly face. Alone, too, without a single acquaintance or recommendation, or even credit, in a country full of those who are ready enough to embarrass the stranger, and without the present means of extricating myself, which might supply their place if any casualty befel me.

There was nothing particularly consolatory in the information that I was yet near two leagues from Varese, when I was already in sight of the lake of that name, to put me in a good humour.

However, there was sufficient contradiction in my nature to make me grow obstinate, in proportion to what I conceived to be the badness of my case. I knew that the cause of this depression was of easy removal, and as the fault was not in my legs, pushed steadily forward. I passed several hamlets, and the villages of Gavirate and Comerio.

But I had shortly to experience how strangely in their turn the feelings of the body may be rendered subservient to the passing temper of the mind. I remember a point in my ascent of the Gries a few days before, where, foiled and breathless and bewildered, with the faithlessness of the ground on which I was climbing, and the total uncertainty what step to make next, I felt both body and soul fagged to a degree I cannot describe ; when, casting my eyes a little on one side, they rested upon a plant for which I had till then sought far and wide amongst the Alps without success, and the emotion of pleasure and surprise which was called forth in consequence instantly turned the scale, and gave me strength of body and light-heartedness to do and to dare.

What the *aquilegia alpina* was to me on the Gries, that the sudden and unexpected view, afforded by a turn in the road, of the Monte Santo of Varese, with the shrine of the Madonna del Monte on the summit, and the long line of white temples peering over the green foliage of the forest, was to me at this hour. From this moment heat and fatigue were forgotten, my footsteps fell lighter on the road, and before sun-set I entered the old town, situated about a mile from the foot of the mountain.

The chapel of the *Madonna del Monte*, a sanctuary much resorted to by pilgrims from all parts of the north of Italy and the neighbouring countries, is situated on the summit of the last eminence on the southern side of the Alps towards the plains of Lombardy. Hither I had bent my steps, in preference to Milan, for many reasons. I loved the mountain better than the plain, and the works of God rather than those of man: and wished to

look upon Italy rather than in my present state of equipment to enter it. For this purpose I had imagined no point could be better chosen than Varese. Among many inns, I fixed upon one because I took a fancy to its style of building, and spent the remaining hours of the day in the vicinity with my sketch-book, restored to perfect good humour by the necessary refreshment and the cool of the evening.

At an early hour I found means to mount an enormous bed, which looked, with its great coverlid of faded damask, more like an old-fashioned bowling-green, than an ordinary place of repose, and soon lost recollection of both the pleasures and turmoils of the past day.

July 23rd.—Upon opening my eyes, about four o'clock this morning, I had the disagreeable view, as I lay on my elevated couch, of a dark line of threatening clouds, stretching over the country; and heard from time to time a low rumble, which made me dread that a change of weather might be at hand, which would not only defeat the main object of my coming hither, but might render my retreat from this country doubly difficult and harassing.

I arose and broke my fast, and then wrapping my map and sketch-book under the breast of my coat, these being with my staff and bottle all my luggage at present, I left the inn, and proceeded to that part of the town which appeared to me most likely to lead towards the Monte Santo. For the position of the latter I had to tax my memory, as all the eminences were enveloped in impenetrable mist. I was not mistaken as it happened, and soon arrived at the commencement of the avenue leading from the town to the mountain.

I had been followed to this point by three mercenaries, who had appeared determined to give me their service and protection, whether I wished for it or not ; and had just contrived to convince them, by keeping some hundred yards in advance, that they were really unnecessary to my comfort, when the thunder storm, which was spreading far and wide with a rapidity and denseness of vapour I never saw equalled, sent an avant-courier, in the shape of a violent shower, which in a few minutes rendered the shelter of the trees bordering the road of no avail and wet me to the skin.

I walked for some time through the avenues, on a fair, broad road, and then reached the foot of the hill, and the commencement of the real *santa via*.

This forms a spacious and paved winding between delightful shrubberies and vineyards, the different stations for the halt of processions being marked by large and well-built temples at every three or four hundred yards. Here I entered the mist resting on the mountain, and as is not unusually the case, found an instant cessation of the rain. The first temple I approached must give me occasion for a general description of their appearance and appropriation.

They are all Grecian, though not precisely of the same plan or dimensions, with porticos, and in general with small pediments and cupolas : very tasteful, and even elegant, in form and proportion. The interior, into which there is a full and free opportunity of prying for both believer and unbeliever through the grated doors and windows, is occupied by a number of plaster figures of the natural size, varying in number according to the scene represented, from five or six to between twenty and thirty. They are

painted and clothed in character, and much, though unequal genius is shewn in the execution and disposition.

The first representation, that of the *Salutation*, I believe, was not the best specimen.

The *Bearing the Cross*, the *Crucifixion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, were very superior, from the number of figures, and the art displayed in their arrangement.

Each of these temples had two *affiches* upon its door-way: the one a mere petition that the passenger would contribute largely to the maintenance of the holy chapel; and the second containing the notification frequently seen at such privileged places of resort: that a perpetual plenary indulgence had been granted by Pope Pius VI. to all the devout pilgrims visiting the holy mountain and shrine, who should pray for the peace of all Christian Princes, the extirpation of heresy, and the exaltation of the holy Mother Church.

I had proceeded for some time, from station to station, when the storm which had never ceased for any considerable time together to bellow in the plain beneath, appeared to be gradually drawing nearer; and when I was in the vicinity of the chapel, in which the *Scourging* was represented, the mist suddenly clearing off, gave place to such a violent rush of rain, that I was glad to take refuge under the portico.

Here I was kept prisoner for upwards of an hour, the rain falling in torrents and streaming down the paved way with great impetuosity, while the thunder rolled far and wide. However, only the skirt of the storm came over the mountain. At the end of

that time the air cleared, and gave me a partial view of the summit crowned with its church-tower and numerous buildings, and of the green wooded eminence to the left. As soon as the rain ceased, I quitted my place of shelter, and shortly after arrived on the summit upon which the sun had begun to cast a passing beam from time to time.

Here I spent another hour in full enjoyment, and forgetfulness of many a weary step I had taken to arrive at this, the extreme bound of my journey. However, beyond my flight of description, I would fain preserve some memorial of the scene which now opened before me; to prove that the end of all this toil was not disappointment, but that I had, though 'midst the blackness and wildness of storm and tempest, some reason to say that I was satisfied.

To the northward lay the range of wooded eminences (stretching between Lago Maggiore and Lugano) of which that whereon I stood was the last towards the plain. In my immediate vicinity were the various buildings which the sanctity of the place, and the necessity of providing entertainment for the concourse of pilgrims, had gathered round the shrine, whose small but elegant tower rose over the regular lines of roofing in its vicinity.

The foreground, as I turned my face to the south, was occupied by the woody ridge of the Monte Santo, decorated with its long line of white Grecian stations, and illuminated by the sparkling sunbeam, as it poured its flood of light from above the vapours, which were rapidly clearing from this part of the country.

Beyond this, lay the wide plains of Italy, not indeed glowing under the deep blue sky and un-

clouded sun with which the imagination delights to associate them ; but beautiful still and majestic, under the rapid and astonishing changes wrought upon their surface by the shifting scenes of the mighty tempest. Towards Como and the east, this assumed a blackness and gloom which I never saw equalled ; and from the deep sonorous tone which issued from that quarter, never dying quite away, and often swelling on the wind with a depth and power which caused an unpleasant vibration on the ear, that seemed to be the main seat of the storm. More to the south, towards Milan, the Po, and the Appenines, the long irregular layers of cloud, though wild and sombre, were more broken. The thunder only burst at intervals in loud explosions from their body, and the heavy lines which marked the descending torrents were in constant motion. This part of the prospect was particularly beautiful. Mingling with the deep blue shade which the thunder-clouds cast upon part of the verdant plain stretching as far as the eye could reach, came the sweet yellow sunbeam, glancing upon woodland, and vineyard, and white cities, and villas, ten times more beautiful by contrast with the pale twilight lingering upon the parts in shade.

Towards the west all was exulting in the light, freshness, and life of the morning. There lay Lago Maggiore, and the mountains behind : still nearer, the lakes of Monate, Gomabio, and Varese, and the descent to them from the hills, sparkling with their paradise of woods, and hamlets, and vineyards, as far as the eye could distinguish.—Such was my glance into Italy, and I would fain communicate to my

readers a portion of the delight and enthusiasm I felt while gazing upon it.

Around me were groups of pilgrims, and the village girls tempting them to the purchase of their votive garlands of everlasting flowers, wax-tapers, and rosaries. Shortly after, I myself stood beneath the entrance of the Holy Place; dedicated,—not to the Lord of lords, and King of kings; not to the meek and lowly Saviour of the world, through whose mediation and bitter sufferings in human form, we alone hope for reconciliation with an offended God, and for a passage through the gate of heaven;—but to the Virgin.

For this I had been prepared by the representation contained in the last and highest temple, viz. that of the ascension of the holy Virgin Mary; a subject which seems to have called forth a greater display of talent and enthusiasm than any scene of the life and sufferings of our Saviour. This is her sanctuary: here the lamp and the taper are always burning, day and night, before her altar; and the prayers and vows of the pilgrim rising continually before the shrine, from whence she is believed to ‘listen and save.’

The poor pilgrims, as they enter, exclaim: *Santa Maria! Sancta Dei Genetrix, ora pro nobis! miserere nobis!*—and when sunk upon the pavement in deep devotion, the same prayer may be seen in the mute motion of their lips.—Devotion! yes, and a devotion apparently so deep, so unfeigned, so humble;—that, while standing by, the tears have rushed into my eyes, and I have humbled myself, and prayed too; not to the Virgin whom I would honour, but cannot

worship ; not to the saints, the martyrs, the cloud of witnesses for whose bright examples I bless God, as so many testimonies to the Christian faith I have learned to profess ; not to the departed just in whose song of praise I hope once to join, but who can never be the propitiation for my sins :—but to God the Judge of all, whose mercy and compassion are held out even to me through Jesus Christ.

The very conviction of the error of those kneeling around me, has often had the effect of humbling me to the dust, from feeling how little worthy I am of the better light which directed my thoughts while yet a child to a firmer and more satisfactory ground of hope, comfort, and dependence ; and how seldom, how very seldom, my superior knowledge stimulates me to deeper devotion.

After having spent as much time at this celebrated place of resort as I possibly could, in consonance with my design of reaching Domo d'Ossola again before night, I took another brief glance at the splendid and peculiar scene around me, and then retraced my footsteps towards the foot of the hill. In descending rapidly over the paved way, from station to station, I indulged in a feeling of great satisfaction, for two principal reasons :

First, that I had really fought my way hither, to the utmost limit of that plan, which, projected in a moment of enthusiasm, had been almost condemned by my cooler thoughts as impracticable ; and had not been disappointed. Then, from a source even more delightful ; which was, that I was now once more on my return towards Switzerland, whose bare and lofty mountains and sweet valleys could never lose their charm, even in the sight of the luxuriant

plains and the vineyards and villas of Italy. I felt it was something for one in a strange land to turn his face to that point of the compass where his friends dwelt.

I had experienced, in the midst of the natural riches which the profuse hand of nature had lavished upon this land, that Italy was no country for a solitary wanderer: and I preferred my seat upon the rude summit of the Furca, though the sun beat upon my head, and my feet were soaked with the snows, to the verdant bank which now offered itself to my repose, where the overhanging vine and the fig-tree yielded a luxuriant shelter from the sun-beam.

It is hard for an honest man to be bothered and questioned by the gens d'armes and douaniers at every turn of the road, and to feel that you are under the surveillance of a rascally police, who are at liberty to treat you well or ill according to the humour that may happen to be uppermost.

The day turned out as fine as the preceding, and quite as hot. Happily for me, however, the hottest portion was spent upon the cool unruffled surface of Lago Maggiore.

Palanza, Mergozzo, Ponte Masone, and Villa, were successively passed without any observation or adventure worth detailing, and about two hours after dark, I entered the gateway of my inn at Domo d'Ossola. A fine mute exhibition of lightning over the mountains to the east, came very opportunely to keep me in good humour during my passage of the disagreeable stretch of road between Villa and the last-mentioned town; though I certainly found it more wearisome at the end of a long day's march than at the beginning.

July 24th.—I may be allowed, as a pedestrian, to consider myself fortunate in being able to say, that, in whatever degree I may have felt my bodily or mental powers depressed at nightfall by exertion, heat, hunger, thirst, or any other trial incidental to the mode of travelling to which I have long habituated myself, I can scarcely remember an instance when two or three hours' repose, even supposing they yielded no unbroken slumber, did not restore to me the power and the will to resume my active operations. This morning was not an exception, and I awoke about four o'clock in perfect spirits and vigour; but having made up my mind the preceding night to take my time, and hearing the rain pouring down in torrents, I dozed another hour and then rose. It was to be sure a dreary look out; the sky and mountains were covered with dense clouds, and though the rain had ceased, there was little or no probability of a permanent improvement. However, about seven o'clock, on counting the hours of daylight which remained, the determination was taken, to make a complete day's work, in spite of the rain, and get fairly across the Simplon to Brieg, in the Vallais. Accordingly, shouldering my goods and chattels, I sallied forth, just as the church-bells were ringing for the early mass, and the good catholics were elbowing each other at the entrance of the chapel-doors.

As far as Crevola the road offered nothing novel, as I had passed it some days before in emerging from the Val Antigorio. Before I reached the great bridge, the rain recommenced; and I may mention once for all, that, with variations for the worse, (of which more presently,) the storm that now began

kept me company for full ten hours, that is to say, till I was within six or seven miles of Brieg.

As the narrative of my passage of the Simplon must therefore of necessity be confined to the description of an alpine storm, from the violence and disadvantages of which the distant scenery was invisible, and the surrounding points of interest seen through a very gloomy medium, it cannot be supposed that much writing should be expended upon it.

The bridge of Crevola, and the villages of Davedro, Isella, and Gondi, were now behind me, and still the wind blew and howled among the pines and rocky inequalities of the surrounding scenery. The storm pelted more and more, and no shadow of hope could be indulged that any change for the better was in store for me. On the contrary, between the last-mentioned hamlet and the village of Simplon, it began, with the country around, to assume a much more savage and bitter aspect. From the Cascade-cavern to Simplon*, where I might have found shelter, if I had thought I could not have forced my way, the tempest treated me very roughly; but I may say cruelly, from thence to the highest ridge of the mountain.

The passage of the Great Scheidegg, from the inclemency of which I can abate nothing, was but little in comparison to what I had here to endure. It is true, I was but thinly clothed; for who, trudging on foot, under the burden of his wardrobe, can be expected to provide himself with both summer and winter covering. A light coat and waistcoat, and lighter pantaloons, were all that I had to oppose to

* The Simplon, 6,450 feet above the sea.

the fury of a blast, against whose piercing sleet and wind the box-coat and all its accompaniments would have afforded insufficient protection. When I say that mingling sleet and rain, driven on by a witheringly cold and powerful wind, hour after hour, had left not a dry thread upon my person—I say but little. There was hardly a fibre or a nerve in my frame which was not affected and quivering from the effects of the blast, which seemed to have annihilated the principle of heat within me, in spite of the rapid motion which I opposed to its power.

After passing Spital, and veering towards the highest ridge, I felt all the bitterness of my situation. My right-hand was without feeling and stiffened round the pole which it bore, and the left if possible more senseless; indeed I was not at one time without a flying sensation of doubt as to the ultimate consequences of this struggle with the elements (to which none beside myself seemed inclined to expose himself, the road being as desert as the rocks above it)—when I perceived symptoms of the cramp in my limbs. As long as I have the power of motion, thought I, as I quickened my pace to a desperate bound, so long shall I keep life within me, were the sky of Greenland above my head—but, that once taken away, where I fall, there I must lie!

Proceeding at this pace, I gained the ridge, passed it, and after descending some time on the leeward slope of the mountain, came unexpectedly upon a small chalet crowded with people, whom the fury of the tempest had driven thither for shelter. I halted for a moment in the door-way, and asked for some slight refreshment. They put the wine to my lips, my hands being still too weak and stiff to be of

service. After paying themselves and depositing my purse in my pocket again, I started afresh, not wishing to run the risk of inaction even for a short period.

Descending rapidly for a considerable time, I got among rocks and forests which gave me shelter from the wind, as well as below the region of the mountain where the violence of the storm was most felt. About Persal the rain ceased to persecute me, and I had for the remainder of my journey more civil treatment, though, from the state of my clothing, I did not think it well to slacken my pace. At length, about seven o'clock, I entered Brieg, thanking God for the possession of health and spirits, in spite of my rough day's work. There had been no rain in the Vallais.

The road over the Simplon is a noble monument of Napoleon's genius and enterprize. The Italian engineers have coped with the greater difficulties on their side of the mountain, in a manner highly worthy of them. Yet, one may be permitted to inquire, if the peace lasts twenty years longer, what will the road over the Simplon be at the expiration of that period? A ruin—unless a regular sum be set aside for its maintenance and repair by the powers interested in its preservation. Without taking into account those casualties to which it is always exposed—the overwhelming torrent, the fall of rocks, the avalanche—the masonry supporting it will, ere many years, want extensive and solid repair; and if this is neglected for any length of time after it has become necessary, the destruction of many of the most difficult parts of the passage will be the inevitable consequence.

July 25th.—I quitted Brieg, and, passing through Glyss, joined the great road again. During the earlier part of this day's march nothing worth mentioning occurred. The weather was fair, though dull. I was much amused with the costumes of the Vallaisans, and still more with their patois; but was surprised at the number of goitres, and shocked at meeting so many *cretins*.

Just before entering the bourg of Leuk, I crossed the Rhone; then, passing through the village, began to mount the ravine leading to the Baths of Leuk or Louèche situated at the foot of the Gemmi.

Though we had had no rain in the course of the day in the valleys, I had all along suspected, from the appearance of the higher ranges of mountains, that the upper country was, as yesterday, the seat of storm; and the aspect of the higher parts of the ravine up which I was now proceeding, convinced me that I was right, and that I should, in all probability, be again the sport of the elements, before I could arrive at the elevated point where the baths are situated. Accordingly, no sooner had I traversed the bridge to the west side of the ravine, than the rain began to descend first by stray drops, and then gradually more and more violently; so that by the time I had passed through the hamlets of Varen and Inden I was again wet to the skin.

On marching up to the first of the five inns built in this singular spot, for the accommodation of the numerous visitors whom the virtue of the mineral springs, or curiosity, induces to resort here in the summer, I was informed that it was full to overflowing; and that, what with the regular visitors, and the travelling parties prevented by the unfavourable

weather from crossing the Gemmi, and accumulated here at the foot, all the other inns were in the same condition. This was unwelcome intelligence: I went round to each, but was informed by the landlord or landlady that there was no chance of entertainment, as every nook, from the ground floor to the false roof, was crammed.

However, at the last of these I grew sturdy, as I saw that the landlord was willing enough to pocket my *batzen* if he could make room for me. I told him I knew it was impossible that every truss of straw and every six foot of floor under his roof was occupied, and as long as he could give me these, I wanted no better entertainment. This brought him to, and he said, he would give me shelter for one night; so there I made my home. As for the baths, I own I cared at that moment nothing about them, and felt no curiosity to go and see them. I had had so much bathing against my will, that I disliked the very name.

At the general supper-table, to which all the household repaired for their evening meal, I met a drolly mixed company. Country people from the upper and lower Vallais, Catholic *curés*, a number of German *burschen*; various invalid visitors from the Catholic cantons; one or two dignitaries from the seat of government at Sion, &c. and a Capuchin friar, who eat more bon-bons, and uttered more good jokes than all the rest put together. You saw in his appearance that he was perfectly aware of the difference between a fast and a feast day.

The mineral springs and baths dispersed throughout the whole country in Switzerland, are to all ranks just what the fashionable watering-places are

in England. Here resort those whose disease has received a name, and those whose malady is indescribable and perhaps beyond the perception of even their medical attendant; the pleasure-hunter, the fortune-hunter, and the newly married couple; the wife and daughter of the better class of peasants come here for their summer excursion; and the half-pay officer, whom long service in foreign parts has rendered impatient of the quiet reigning in his homestead, here finds a mess and a mixed society, which may help to dispel his ennui.

Bed-time arrived, and a wretched mattress received my wet person, for, as I had entered, so had I to sit all the evening. However, as I felt no pain, I cared for no inconvenience, and slept soundly on my miserable couch, till awakened at break of day by the cold; when, finding further repose out of the question, I rose and went down stairs.

At the general breakfast-table, plentifully but plainly provided (all the household, master, mistress, servants, and guests being herded unceremoniously at the scramble-general), the weather was the topic of conversation, just as is usual at one of the English watering places. I employed myself in laying in my provision, and had no time for wordy speculation.

The prospect, however, was to be sure dreary enough. The snow had fallen heavily on the mountain all night, and was still falling, as we could see from below. I soon discovered that there was no idea of trudging in any mind but my own.

I believe I too should have been forced to stay from a feeling of prudence, and not attempt the passage, if two or three reasons, such as they were, had not kept me steady to my purpose. First, cer-

tain indications, both in the sky and barometer, that a change of weather was at hand; secondly, I had no lodging, even if I did stay; and thirdly, I had noticed, by the help of a telescope, two peasants preparing to scale the precipices, in spite of the snow, and in the trail of these I was determined if possible to strike, before it should be obliterated. I therefore made my arrangements for starting; gave my shoes, which, in spite of their tremendous soles and iron defences, were gradually yielding to the extraordinary tear and wear of the preceding days, an extra buttering (such being the fashion among the mountains), paid my bill, and prepared to depart.

When my purpose was known in the common-room, each had a word to say upon the matter; and some forthwith commenced the usual mode of intimidation, by the relation of fearful stories in point. Pre-eminent amongst these was a Vallaisan priest, the colour of whose face evinced that he knew the taste of every vintage in the Vallais. Accompanying his rhetoric with much gesture, he related, that when he was last at Leuk, a man in precisely such weather, though perfectly conversant with the pass over the Gemmi, got bewildered in a snow storm by the Dauben-see on the summit, and was found cold, stiff, and dead, having perished in consequence of his temerity. This was, to be sure, rather disheartening: but, when it was discovered, upon mentioning the name of the poor man, to give his tale more effect, that he was at that very moment in sound health in the kitchen, a general laugh succeeded, during which I made my bow and departed.

After half an hour's walk, I reached the foot of that gloomy line of precipices which form the front of the Gemmi on this side, and over whose dizzy

ledges and gloomy rifts the winding pathway is carried. I had toiled for about three quarters of an hour up these rocks, rendered slippery by the rain, (for I had not yet reached the region of the snow) when I came unexpectedly upon the rear of a party of peasants climbing in like manner up the mountain.

This was no unpleasant circumstance ; for, to tell the truth, though I made no doubt of being able to reach the top of the precipices, it being next to impossible to make a mistake, where only one foot-way existed, I was not without apprehension respecting my further progress when once on the summit. There I should have the mist and the snow-storm to contend with, and must traverse flats where the fresh snow would lie deep and in drifts, and the footsteps of foregoing travellers would be quickly obliterated.

Some time still elapsed before we gained this part of the passage, as, towards the top of the precipices, the snow often filled the hollow way and rendered advance difficult. However, this was at length effected ; and by common consent we all retired out of the driving wind and sleet, into a small shed, to breathe a little, and to take such refreshment as each had provided, as well as to put ourselves into the best state of defence against the storm, while crossing the head of the mountain to the little hospital at Schwarenbach, on the northernmost brow of the pass*. A moderate use of my stock of Kirschwasser, a crust of bread, and securing my old white hat on my head, were all the preparation in my power.

The last-mentioned article, common-place as the subject sounds, really demands a word, and shall

* Pass of the Gemmi, 7460 feet above the sea.

have it. It had become, in consequence of its share in its master's adventures, the most wonderfully shaped figure conceivable: neither oval, nor conical, nor pyramidical, nor a cube, nor even a parallelopiped, and I much question if even Lloyd's catalogue could match it. It was a kind of conglomerate, in one part or another of which you might detect an approximation to almost any given figure. I had the same kind of affection for it, and have still for its memory, as we entertain towards any old friend, animate or inanimate, who has been firm and faithful in storm as well as in sunshine, and of whom we cannot think without being reminded of many a day's adventure. But I must forward!

The journey from the summit to the Schwarenbach along the shores of the elevated lake termed the Daubensee, was rapidly and merrily performed in about three quarters of an hour, though the snow blew without intermission upon our heads, and lay between one and two feet deep upon the rocks and marshy flats. At the hospital, the peasants seemed inclined to rest, and take their time. I therefore bade them farewell, and descending got very shortly out of the region of both snow and rain into that of bright warm sunshine, which was truly welcome. I had now amusement enough among the beautiful verdure of the higher alps, and the fine views upon the neighbouring glaciers, to cheat the hours occupied in descending through the higher valley of Kander, and the lower vale of Frutigen, till I reached the large village of that name. After some refreshment, I calculated I had still time to finish my present journey before a very late hour, and accordingly resumed my march to proceed four leagues further to my home in the Simmenthal. With

what delight did I gaze upon the Niesen, though covered with snow ; upon the blue lake of Thun, and the far distant Jura upon the horizon. This feeling was augmented on my coming within sight of the white castle of Wimmis, and the Bär guarding the entrance of the Simmenthal, and reached its height about nine in the evening, on arriving at Erlenbach, and approaching the friendly threshold. Old Coquet was the first to notice and welcome me. She, poor dog, had conceived a great affection for me ever since I happened to superintend the salutary operation of amputating the lower joint of the tail of her only surviving puppy, and gave him the name of Stumah on the happy occasion, which he bears to this day. I believe she took me for a dog-doctor, and reposed confidence in me accordingly. And so much may I be permitted to say, that no-where in my wanderings have I seen a more charming retreat ; no-where a more peaceful valley ; have no-where heard a mountain-torrent whose waters made sweeter music than the Wildebach, which now sounds in my ears ; or seen mountains upon whose green sides the bells of the cattle chimed more melodiously ; and more especially, have never and can never, out of my own country and immediate circle of relatives, find more disinterestedly affectionate hearts, whose wishes seem to anticipate the slightest desire I may form.

This is not only sufficient to make me forget mis-haps, difficulties, and dangers, but would almost make me forget those scenes where I imagined myself most happy, and where my imagination and senses seemed to reap the fullest and most unalloyed enjoyment.

CHAPTER V.

“ In the mid-days of Autumn, on their eves
The breath of winter comes from far away,
And the sick west continually bereaves
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
To make all bare before he dares to stray
From his north cavern.”

A WEEK'S respite from the labours of my pilgrimage was not to be denied me after so many days' unbroken activity.—During this interval, however, my acquaintance with many objects in the vicinity of my retreat became more complete, and every advantage was afforded me of rendering it as much so as possible.

I made my second ascent of the Stockhorn, and was fully remunerated, by the clearness of the weather, for my former indifferent success. The botany of the mountain had suffered from a twofold cause. The inclemency of the days preceding my arrival had sprinkled all the heights above 5,000 feet with a coating of snow, which had injured the blossoms of many plants ; while the presence of the cattle on the highest range of pastures was another cause of many of the most beautiful among them having almost vanished from the more fertile slopes of the mountain. Of course, all was grist that came to their mill, and the poor illiterate animals had cropped, ruminated, and digested the rarest as well as the most

common plants, never dreaming that they were disappointing any living creature by so doing.

The Niesen was the next mountain of any magnitude which attracted my curiosity, and as I had no subsequent opportunity of ascending it again and again, as was the case with that above-mentioned, it may deserve a few pages of description.

It has been already pointed out, as the termination of a range of mountains running to the northward from the central Alps. Though by no means the most elevated in the chain, its position gives it a decided advantage as a point of observation; and I do not remember to have seen a mountain that can compare with it for imposing form, and beautiful proportion, when seen from the country about the lake of Thun, above which it rises to the height of six thousand feet*.

Our party left Erlenbach for the Bourg of Wimmis, at the foot of the mountain, some time after sunset, August 2nd; and the cool and still hours of the ensuing night were spent in slowly ascending the deep ravine between it and the flanks of the Bettfluh†, by the pale but clear light of a waning moon.

I should not be doing justice to the fair sex in general, if I did not make mention, that the difficulties of our obscure and precipitous road were shared by my hostess and two of her female friends, with a good humour, patience, and perseverance, which might well put their male attendants to the exercise of all the wit and sprightliness that nature had more sparingly bestowed upon them.

* The Niesen, 7,816 feet above the sea.

† Bettfluh 8,000. The Männliflüh, in the centre of the chain, 8,727.

Between two and three in the morning, we bivouacked for half an hour in an unoccupied châlet, situated on the slope of the mountain.

I would gladly give my reader an idea of the solemn scenery of these elevated regions, during the calm hours of a summer night. As to sounds they are but few, at least when the air is still. The vicinity of man, productive in general of any thing but repose, has caused almost profound silence to reign among these wilds, where once the cautious tread of the bear rustled nightly among the dry needles of the pine forest, and the howl of the wolf re-echoed from the waste. As I stood upon an elevated knoll wide of the châlet, through whose interstices gleamed the fire over which my companions were amusing themselves, my ear was struck from time to time by an abrupt and indistinct sound from the upper parts of the mountain; probably caused by the crumbling rock, or the fall of rubbish brought down by the cascades. An equally dubious and sudden sound would occasionally rise from the deep valley beneath; else nothing fell upon the ear, but the monotonous murmur of the mountain-torrent working its way over stock and rock in the depth of the ravine. The moon barely lighted up the wide pastures sufficiently to distinguish their extent or the objects sprinkled upon them. Here and there a tall and barkless pine stood conspicuously forward on the verge of the dark belt of forest, with its bleached trunk and fantastic branches glistening in the moonshine. The valley beneath was marked by the light haze hanging over it, and across and above this the eye faintly caught the outline of the vast white precipices of the Günzenen, and the line of rocky summits in the neighbourhood of the Stockhorn.

As we proceeded, it often happened, that the irregular eminences on the flanks of the mountain, which bordered the comparatively narrow ravine in which we were toiling, diminished our field of view very considerably, as well as cast our pathway into deep shade. This was particularly the case about half an hour before the earliest dawn, when we were near the head of the ravine, and ready to turn to the left upon the open and steep side of the mountain. However, just at this time some light and transparent bodies of vapour began to float over the surface of the mountains; and, as they passed swiftly over our heads, threw into the deep dell a most singular and opportune twilight, from the reflection of the silvery rays which the moon still cast on them.

A second châlet, high up on the side of the mountain, received our party just as all objects began to emerge from their obscurity, and the air to freshen with the approaching sun-rise. We were here still nearly two leagues from the summit; and it was not till near six before the whole party had assembled upon the highest point. The sun had then risen some degrees above the horizon.

Here we exulted in the splendid view displayed around us. The steep apex of the Niesen overhangs a vast hollow to the NE. Beyond this, at the foot of the mountain, appeared the bourg and castle of Wimmis, at the edge of that tract of broken country through which the Simmen and the Kander work their way from the mountains to their point of junction with one another and with the lake.

More to the right lay that diversified and smiling region, which, for its fertility and beauty, was by old writers termed *la petite Bourgogne*, with the castle

of its ancient capital, Spiez, *the golden Court*, glistening on the edge of the lake which stretched in a curve from NEE. to E.

Thence the eye followed the valley of the Aar from the castle and town of Thun further and further into the distance, beyond Berne, and over the Uchtland, lying between the Alps and the Jura; a cultivated tract of country, containing innumerable villages and hamlets, up to the very base of the latter range dividing Switzerland from France.

But this wide vista, beautiful as it was, could not long detain the eye from the other less smiling but more magnificent parts of the panorama. Directly to the NW. rose the Stockhorn and his neighbours glistening in the sunshine. To the right and left we saw the vallies of Frutigen and the Simmen, with their two offsets, the vales of Kander and Diemtigen, stretching like pieces of embroidered green velvet for leagues into the mountains on either side.

In the direction of the lake of Brienz, a white body of mist had arisen from the flanks of the mountain very shortly after our arrival, and kept its position during the whole two hours of our stay, though happily its marring influence was confined to that quarter alone.

The opposite horizon to that of which I have been attempting to give a sketch, was fortunately unobstructed. Over the intermediate mountain-ridges and summits, forming our middle ground to S., SE., and SW., soared the vast glaciers of the central chain, sparkling in the white light of the newly-risen sun. The Altels* at the head of the Kanderthal,

*Altels 12,186 feet above the sea.

the Wild-Strubel*, at the junction of the range of the Niesen with the main chain, the Blümlis-Alp†, with its long waste of glaciers and singular *Stock* rising from their bosom, the Jungfrau, and the two Eigers, were all particularly imposing from their comparative proximity.

But now that I have dwelt upon the romance of the scene, I should not omit to mention the accompanying circumstances, in which there was none.

It was desperately cold, and on the summit itself the east wind blew so keenly at intervals, that few of the party had courage to buffet the breeze on that point long together. The temperature was indeed sufficiently cold to have chilled any one's enthusiasm. It will be recollected, that the preceding hours had been spent in exertion; that our feet and clothes were saturated with the dew, and that especially the female part of our number were but little accustomed to these nocturnal expeditions. A small hut, or rather hovel of shingles, had been constructed on the leeward side of the summit, and we had brought with us the elements of a fire from the last chalet. This was our withdrawing-room; and I have still before me the picture of the woe-be-gone interior and its occupants. The fire would not burn, and the shoes and flounces would not dry; cold and fatigue brought on drowsiness, and drowsiness entailed a lack of wit, if not of good temper; in short, there was an inconceivable difference between the bright face of nature without, and the pale faces and heavy eyes of the lords and ladies of the creation within.

* Wild-Strubel 10,900.

† Blümlis Alp 11,637.

But another natural exhibition was still in reserve for us, which made us forget the inclement air, and assemble once more on the very highest point of the mountain. This was the appearance of that beautiful phenomenon, the circular iris, not unfrequently observed among the Alps, since the ascent of the loftier ridges has become of more common occurrence. A portion of the before-mentioned white vapour was hurried by the wind from the east side of the sharp point upon which one or two of us were standing, into the hollow of the mountain to the westward, and after some time became a tolerably dense body. We found, that whenever it happened that the sun shone brightly upon our backs, as we faced this vapour, so that our shadows were faintly depicted upon it, the circular iris was instantly formed round the head of the figure. The brilliancy, and even the diameter of this reflection, varied constantly, according as the rays of the sun fell more or less vividly upon the mass, for small portions of the mist were continually rising and intercepting his beams for an instant; much also seemed to depend upon the body of vapour upon which our shadow was cast having a certain density. Once, and only once, the iris was doubled, all the elements necessary to its production being unusually favourably disposed; it then formed two complete and most brilliantly coloured concentric circles. Of course, each individual had his own exclusive iris, which moved as he moved, and remained stationary when he did so; while it was quite invisible to his neighbour. When the sun rose to such a height above the horizon, as to make a renewal of this

beautiful and amusing exhibition hopeless, we commenced our descent.

I believe the whole party, without exception, hailed the low shingle roof of the first *châlet*, on our downward path, with considerable pleasure. It is situated on the high and precipitous side of the mountain, near a straggling and weather-beaten group of pines, the very last towards the summit.

Truly, however the mind may be animated with enthusiasm for the wild and stern features of the magnificent scenery of these mountains, and exult in the peculiar feelings to which their contemplation may give birth; there is something in the approach to the neighbourhood of the rude but convenient homestead of the hardy peasant, which, without destroying these feelings, awakens others equally dear and cherished.—We feel that—

“The shepherd and his cot
Are privileged inmates of deep solitude;
Nor would the nicest anchorite exclude
A field or two of brighter green, or plot
Of tillage ground, that seemeth like a spot
Of stationary sunshine.—”

After a brief sojourn here, we continued our descent into the long ravine between the Niesen and Bettfluh, and passing through the same scenes by bright sunshine, which some hours before we had scarcely discerned by moonlight, we finally reached Wimmis about noon; and in the cool of the evening returned up the valley to our quiet home.

August 8th.—Six days had now elapsed since the expedition last mentioned, and I was once again equipped for a fresh departure. Upon putting my-

self in motion, instead of crossing the church-yard, and descending the long flight of covered steps, which forms an inclined bridge from the knoll on which the church stands, over the gully of the Wildebach to the village ; I turned short to the right, and following a foot-way leading obliquely over the hill-side, fell into the main road leading up the Simmenthal. My purpose was now to return to Neuchâtel by the circuitous route of the Vallais, the Great Saint Bernard, Châmounix, Geneva. A summons which I had received, but a few days before, to repair to Neuwied on the Rhine, in the course of the ensuing month, to meet with a near relative, rather limited me as to time. However, as will be seen presently, two-thirds of my intended route were left untrodden for the present.

My friend saw me on my way, in the good old-fashioned style ; then bidding me *Glück zu!* left me in possession of pole and pack, a bright morning, and clear road, to my own fortune and meditations.

My fortune conducted me, without playing me any left-handed trick, up and down over the diversified ground forming the bottom of the valley, for five leagues onward to the large village of Zweysimmen, in the Ober Simmenthal. Here, instead of pursuing the course of the Simmen towards the head of the valley, I turned into the line of a small tributary stream of the same name, flowing from the eastward, and traced it for several miles to its head in the Saanen-mööser, a flat, spongy tract of country, among the mountains in that quarter. After traversing this marsh, I descended to the valley of Gstaad, upon the river Saane, a few miles above the bourg of Gessenay, and then turning to the south-

ward, followed a footway leading directly up to the foot of the higher Alps, through the Gsteigthal, and arrived at Gsteig, a small village situated close under the lofty and precipitous Mittaghorn, and near the foot of the Sanetsch pass, the most westerly of the passes over the Berne alps to the Vallais, early in the evening. Here there was no lack of accommodation at the Bear. The most conspicuous figure in the armorial bearings of the canton, is of course a favourite sign-post within its limits.

The people who inhabit this retired valley speak purer and more pleasantly-sounded German, than the inhabitants of any other part of Switzerland, as far as I have heard ; and it may be here remarked, that the language of the inhabitants of the mountain districts is in general better and far less disagreeable than the dialects of the cantons in the lower country.

I was happy to have it in my power to vary and to render my evening here more entertaining and instructive by a visit to the clergyman of the village, to whom I had an introductory note.

The pastor of an Oberland village is, as may be supposed, in general the only man of liberal education and pursuits in the parish. His chance of the advantages of occasional society, is of course very unequal, depending on the particular position of his cure. A few leagues may make all the difference between one post, where a smiling and delightful country, the vicinity of other parishes, and an open and uninterrupted communication with the capital, may leave but little necessity for self-denial ; and another, where there must be a superior and powerful stimulus for its exertion. Many of the latter description, situated in the higher and more

remote vallies of the Alps, under the shadow of the mountains forming the central chain, where, according to the saying of the country, the inhabitants enjoy *nine months' winter and three months' cold sun*, are, by the accumulation of the snows in winter, often cut off from all facility of communication with the world below, for many weeks together. There the good pastor may remain for months, buried as it were with his people ; watching by day the red sunbeams shifting from peak to peak, from one white and sparkling mass, high above his head, to another, while the snows around his dwelling are never enlivened by them ; and hearing by night the wintry tempest howling among the precipices and rugged pine forests ; while, hour by hour, the snow settles deeper and deeper on his roof, and ever and anon the crash of the falling rock, or the thunder of the distant avalanche swells the chorus of indescribable sounds which fill the air.

But this is of little consequence. If he is a true soldier of Christ, giving up his heart and his way to God, to be made the instrument in his hand of temporal guidance and spiritual support to his flock,—there is his post of honour ! He feels, that, to be cut off from the rest of the world is not to be cut off from the presence and help of his Maker ; that, where his field of view and of action is bounded, there his duty becomes more clearly laid down ; that, where man is most impotent, there the power and mercy of God is most evident ; and where the creature is most humbled in the sense of his own nothingness and dependence upon the Creator, it is there that God manifests himself most clearly, as the Parent and Preserver of all living.

The Mittaghorn, and high rocky summits in the vicinity of the Sanetsch, abound with the chamois. I have often heard their whistle, but have never been able, by the minutest examination of the rocks, to discover the animal from which it proceeded.

Bears have been almost entirely driven from their former haunts in this chain. Nevertheless, every now and then, a stranger comes on a reconnoitering journey from the Vallais or Italian alps, and, as might be expected, seldom or never returns to tell his tale. The moment he is discovered to be in the country, the tocsin is sounded, and the poor fellow pays for his restlessness or curiosity with his life.

Last winter, the pastor informed me, one was observed to be in the vicinity of Gsteig, by the ravages committed on a flock of sheep ; and of course the hue and cry was raised by the villagers. Unfortunately there happened to be no snow, and it was no easy matter to light upon his trail. After long search, however, a party of the peasants thought they had discovered his footsteps in a sandy pathway, and traced them into a forest to the east of the village. In this was a deep gully, with a cavity in the rocks at one side. While beating the bushes, one of their number incautiously descended to the bottom of the ravine, to drink at the stream running down it. While he was busy, with his nose in the water, the party above saw the bear make its appearance from the rift just mentioned, and scramble down, with furious haste towards the man, who was too busy to notice him. They shouted, but the rush of the water prevented his hearing them ; meanwhile no time was lost by the assailant, who was not within shot, till he got too close to the man to allow the carbine to

be used with safety to their companion. The peasant, having quenched his thirst, raised himself up, and there stood Bruin ready to administer that squeeze for which his species is celebrated. The poor fellow, dreadfully shocked, and giving himself up for lost, had nevertheless the good sense to recollect that he had intended to shoot the bear. So, without further ceremony, he fired his piece, but in too great a hurry to take correct aim, for the bullet whizzed over the bear's head, instead of through it. Nevertheless, Bruin seemed not to relish the singeing of his whiskers, and turned tail, when a second shot, from one of the party above, brought him down.

August 9th.—Between three and four, I quitted my night-quarters, as I had no firm faith in the signs of the weather, and wished to cross the pass before I should be prevented by the rain.

A few minutes' walk over the little plain forming the head of the Gsteigthal brought me to the steep break in the breast of the mountain, down the lower part of which the Saane rushes, after leaping from the brow of a precipice to the right, in two parallel slips of water of considerable volume. In an hour and a half I had climbed upon the head of the mountain, the passage of the greater part of which is rather tedious, as its breadth allows of no wide extent of view either to the N. or S. The ground was covered with hoar-frost, and the air so cold that I found it impossible to hold my pencil.

The mountains piled on either side of the Sanetsch are of an unusually savage character, exhibiting for the most part an undulatory surface of utterly

barren rock, unenlivened by a single green blade of any description.

Unfruitful solitudes, that seem to upbraid
The sun in heaven!

The passage* though long, steep, and tedious, is not dangerous, unless in very bad weather. The Rawyl, to the eastward, the intermediate pass between this and the Gemmi, is at times frightfully so, and accidents occur not unfrequently.

When I at length gained the ridge overhanging the southern declivity, the clouds, which had been dispersing for the last half hour, interposed no screen whatever between my position and the noble view which there presented itself. From the Cima di Jazi to Mont Blanc, all the summits of the Italian alps rose on the southern horizon in unobscured majesty. Mont Cervin was particularly conspicuous among the long range of glaciers, by its position exactly opposite me at the head of the Eringerthal. Of the whole length of the valley, from the noble glacier Tourmente, at its upper extremity, to its junction with the great valley of the Rhone, my position commanded an entire view.

After descending for some time, I joined the Morge, as it came tumbling sideways over an inclined bed of shale, from the mountains to the east. My further progress, for about three hours, offered nothing particularly worthy of note, except the views which opened from time to time into the Vallais, down the centre of which I descried the Rhone, running like a long thread of silver. A picturesque chapel stood at the termination of my

* Pass of the Sanetsch 7,500 feet above the sea.

route down the savage defiles of the Morge; and turning the angle of the mountain to the left, I made my way over the lower hills gradually toward the Rhone, and the old town of Sion, lying at the foot of its trebly castellated hills.

It was not my plan to make any long sojourn here, but, descending to the outskirts, I turned aside, just as the bell of the Jesuits' church tolled noon, into the vestibule of a little chapel without the walls, where the deep and cool shade of an ancient lime afforded a luxurious retreat from the power of a scorching sun.

After eight hours' uninterrupted march, I thought I had earned half an hour's repose, and dozed away my given time at full length upon the low wall, lulled rather than disturbed by the buzz from the gate of the town, and the hum of the insects among the foliage. However, long before one o'clock I had resumed my burden, and was once more tramping upon the white, even, and dusty surface of my old ungracious acquaintance, the great road of the Simplon.

I should vainly attempt to depict my state of feeling some time after, when, having crossed the Rhone a few miles below Sion, I came in sight of the tower of Martigny, perched up at the extremity of a perfectly straight and level line of road, stretching for above eight miles before me. Even if I were to attempt and succeed in giving a vivid sketch of my disgust and perplexity, while marching for above two hours through a vile marsh with this object always before me, I fear I should not meet with much sympathy or compassion among my own countrymen at least. For I have seen with much pain, for some years back, that our national taste in

roads is generally sacrificed to convenience, and that nobody will now-a-days vote for a crooked road, however picturesque, when it happens that a perfectly straight one is practicable.

Added to the cause of ennui just alluded to, there was yet another. Long before I reached Martigny, I had ceased to be sanguine about the prosecution of my proposed journey; auguring no good from the rising wind, which, as evening drew near, sung fitfully and dolefully amongst the rushes and willows which bordered the stagnant pools on either side of the road. The utter darkness of the night which followed, after I was housed at the Three Kings at Martigny, did not mend my hopes. This portentous obscurity, however, was not without a beacon; for, high on the side of the mountain opposite my windows, some roods of the pine forest were in conflagration, throwing deep red flame and smoke far to the leeward.

All the evil omens were, alas, but too prophetic. When I left my apartment at five o'clock, (*August 10th*), the day seemed hardly to have dawned. The vast mountains, in whose angle Martigny is situated, were cut nearly at their base by heavy gray clouds; and before another hour had elapsed, the tempest burst, and put an end for the present to my project of visiting the Great Saint Bernard or Chamounix.

Though so far disappointed, I did not remain in Martigny to muse about it; but, starting shortly after for the Pays de Vaud, was rewarded in the sequel by many a bright gleam of sunshine. The route by St. Maurice, Bex, Villeneuve, and Vevay, to Lausanne, is so well known to all the world, that there is no reason to dwell upon its details here.

Like most travellers, whether pedestrians or not, I got sprinkled with the spray of the Pissevache; was challenged by the douanier at the bridge of St. Maurice; gazed with delight upon the broad lake of Geneva; quoted Byron in the dungeon of Chillon; thought of Rousseau as I passed Clarens; got miserably scorched in the road among the vineyards from Vevay to Lausanne, and finally execrated the bad paving and uneven streets of this town, while my eye lingered with delight upon the magnificent view it commands. From hence an evening's walk brought me to Yverdon, and the following morning's by the shores of our blue lake, to my old and agreeable quarters at Neuchâtel.

In this town I made but a brief stay at that time. The rays of the sun falling full upon the rocky slope of the Jura, where the trees and verdure, which no doubt once softened their glare, have yielded place to the walled and arid vineyard, added to their reflection from the lake, renders Neuchâtel as hot as a stove during the summer months. Accordingly, all the Neuchâtelois and Neuchâteloises who can (and that is a large proportion) retreat to their country houses and farms, in some cool and sequestered corner of the adjacent mountains, or take an airing at the baths of the country for some months, till the town becomes habitable again.

The town was just in this deserted state when I set foot in it, and, after spending a few days in the neighbourhood amongst those friends who had not retreated beyond reach, I proceeded across the Jura towards the northern frontier of Switzerland.

In spite of the tameness of its outline, the Jura is far from being uninteresting, even while the magnificence of its elder brethren the Alps is fresh upon the memory. There are the traces of a wild and overwhelming convulsion within its recesses, which almost surpass in kind any thing that I have hitherto seen in the latter. The scenery of those profound and savage defiles, where some undetermined and fierce engine of God's power has in ages past ploughed deep and narrow chasms through the substance of these mountains, from the ridge to their foundation, is very peculiar and well worth a more detailed examination than it is consistent with my plan to give them here.

Among these, that through which the Birse flows towards Basle, generally known under the name of Moutier Grand Val, is perhaps the most remarkable.

The traveller enters the valley of the Birse from Sonce-boz, a village at the confines of the spacious Val St. Imeir, over a rocky ridge, and under the well known Pierre Pertuis. This remarkable rock was in all probability perforated by the Romans, in the third century, when Aventicum and Augusta Rauracorum on the Rhine were at the summit of their prosperity; thus completing the line of communication between the two, so temptingly suggested by the two valleys of the Birse toward the north, and the Suze towards the south.

The Jura consists of a number of interrupted and parallel ranges, with intermediate valleys. Accordingly, on descending from the ridge, on the top of which the Pierre Pertuis is situated, the traveller enters the valley between it and the next ridges of the chain more to the north.

After passing Court, a large village, the river Birse turns abruptly towards the mountain, and enters the first compartment of this wonderful defile. It appears to be a groove or furrow driven through the very heart of the chain. The convulsion which produced this has thrown the strata of the mountain into every possible state of confusion, not only in the immediate vicinity, but in the whole part of the ridge where it took place.

In the twilight at the bottom of this profound chasm the river foams and murmurs over an uneven and obstructed bed, while the eye looks up to one line of gray precipices after another to many hundred feet above the road. The pines, which seize upon every tenable position among the disjointed fragments, both in the depth of the chasm and up the sides of the precipices, and hang balanced in air, in positions where the eye can distinguish no source of nutriment, add to the gloom of the compressed ravine.

At the village of Moutier you traverse another open valley, and then enter the second part of the defile terminating as Courrendelin.

The third division into which you enter, after traversing the plain of Delemont, though less savage than the preceding parts, is still uncommonly romantic, and continues for many leagues without any great break, till within a few miles of Basle.

The latter part of this route is chequered by many a delightful coup d'œil breaking the uniformity of the long horizontal lines of gray limestone rock, stained and glazed by the calcareous matter exuding from their veins, and the forest scenery which is sprinkled above and below them. A ruined tower

or white chapel perched upon the rocks; patches of pasture-ground with cottages seen half-way up the mountains; hamlets, villages, and mills upon the banks of the stream, often catch and detain the eye. Even the two first wildest divisions of the defile are not without their softenings, as in several of their most secluded nooks mills or forges are posted, and many bold and well-constructed bridges span the boisterous mountain-torrent. The vicinity of Soyeres is peculiarly delightful. But I did not mean to detain my reader here.

From the summit of a bold and trackless ridge which I traversed on my route from the forges of Reuchenette on the Suze to Court in the valley of the Birse, to avoid a long round which the regular road makes, by passing Sonce-boz, Pierre Pertuis, and Tavannes;—I took my last view for the present of the Alps: the sun had already set before I gained the summit of the ridge, and they appeared a long, white, and cold range against the fading sky behind them.

When all had vanished from the horizon, and the darkness which was fast gathering round me, with the rising blast which sighed dolefully among the pines scattered over the mountain side, warned me to think of descending towards Court, whose lights I saw glimmering from the deep valley beneath, I turned once more to the north, and pursued my way.

I will not disguise the feeling of pleasure and exultation, when, one fresh morning some weeks after, the Alps once more appeared upon the horizon. It was from the summit of one of the multitude of hills which compose the country generally termed the Black Forest, situated between the villages of Dry-

bach and Förenbach, remarkable as giving birth to the very remotest source of the Danube, which ‘welled away’ a small and guggling spring from the foot of the hill towards the distant town of Donau-eschingen, where it first becomes dignified with the name it bears through so many provinces to its bourn in the Black Sea.

The intermediate time had been strangely chequered by equally unexpected disappointment and unexpected pleasure; alternate vexation and anxiety of mind, and of surprise and complete contentment; by circumstances, in short, serving to shew me more forcibly than ever, how man proposes and God disposes. The details of these events, however interesting to myself, would here be out of place.

At Drybach I left all the world busy in preparation for the duties and pleasures of a Michaelmas fair, in which straw manufacture seemed to be the staple commodity.

The country between this town and Förenbach is very hilly, and a few outlines of its appearance, I think, may give a general idea of the aspect of this district. The whole of the Black Forest, as far as I have traversed it, consists of a jumble of roundish hills rising about 2,000 feet on an average above the Lake of Constance, and with deep sequestered valleys between them. The pine forests, to the sombre hue of which the country owes its popular name, are sprinkled in patches of greater or less extent over its surface, sometimes clothing the tops and sides of the mountain with a wide and dismally unbroken mantle, and more often spotting the landscape in every direction with clumps of very limited size, and of every possible figure. In the interior of the

country there are but few valleys of considerable extent; but towards the Rhine there are several of great length and beauty. The main portion of the face of the country unoccupied by forest is of course pasture-land, and there is great resemblance between the manners, domestic arrangements, and cottage architecture of the inhabitants and the Swiss.

As I crossed the mountains between the villages just mentioned, I met many straggling parties of the peasantry repairing to the fair. The bright colours of the female costume form a singular contrast with the sombre hues of the landscape. Their dress consists of a bright yellow straw hat, a short pink jacket over a scarlet vest, a dark gown over a scarlet petticoat, and bright scarlet stockings displayed to the knees. Their hair is tied behind, and flaunted a yard and a half in the rear, in two long plaits intermingled with black ribbon. Many a long league in the afternoon and evening of this day, after passing through Donaueschingen, brought me some time after sunset to the first village over the frontier of the grand Duchy of Baden, and into a corner of Switzerland.

The following days were spent in making my way from Schaffhausen by way of Zurich, Baden, Arau, and Soleure, to Neuchâtel; and of this I offer no uninterrupted detail, as I have nothing very novel to relate. The hues of autumn were stealing over the landscape, and though they added considerably to the beauties of the fair and varied country through which I passed, the season had its inconveniences; shorter days and longer nights, and what was still worse, the morning mists, which generally accompany fine weather at this season. These seldom dissipated before noon, and worked me no little annoy.

Then, to be sure, there was an increase of beauty. As they vanished, and melted into the sky and against the mountain side, the sun glistened with tenfold brilliancy upon the damp surface of the landscape, and sparkled upon millions of dew-drops on every bush.

If there be one spot, on my homeward route, which claims a word in preference to any other, it must be the old time-worn and weather-beaten castle of Habsburg.

Three powerful streams, the Aar, the Reuss, and the Limmat, draining all the northern acclivities of the Alps from the Pays de Vaud to the Grisons, form their triple junction in a small plain in the heart of Argovie. Between the two former, a little to the south of this point, rise the gray walls of the monastery of Cönigsfelden; and on a hill a mile or two further up the right bank of the Aar, the castle of Habsburg, a rude and unsightly stronghold, has peered over the foliage of the forest for eight long and eventful centuries. It was built by a grandson of Guntram; a nobleman, who, driven from his fair domains on the Rhine, took refuge in this part of Helvetia, where he still possessed some small hereditary estates. Its early possessors lived, like the other rapacious and warlike nobles in their vicinity, upon the spoil and by the oppression of the weaker, and trusted in the strength of their castle and the hardihood of their character for their existence. Assuredly, while gazing from this commanding position upon the country beneath, and lusting for this or that fair village or fertile tract upon its surface, they never, in their wildest dream of ambition, glanced at that pitch of greatness and

dominion which, ere many generations, was to be the lot of their house.

While one noble and ancient line after another, whose fame and prowess had been the theme from time immemorial in this country, were quickly fading from the face of the earth, leaving the perpetuation of their name and deeds to the genealogist or wandering minstrel, the house of Habsburg was gathering strength year by year, and in the time of the great Rudolph, rose to a degree of stability and greatness which it has maintained, through good and evil, even to this day. At the birth of Rudolph, every thing seemed to combine to clear the theatre for the field of his action. Berthold, Duke of Zaeringen, of a powerful and ancient race, founder of the city of Berne, died the same year, and was buried with his shield and helmet as the last of his race.

The house of Lenzburg was no more, and their possessions and influence had devolved to the Counts of Kybourg. Ere many years, while Rudolph was yet in his prime, Count Hartman, the last of this line, was also consigned to the dust. Even where these circumstances did not immediately increase his extent of territory, they never failed to augment his power and consequence ; so that, before the lapse of many years, from the limited dominion of which he could see the whole extent from the great hall of this castle, Rudolph became the lord of extended territories, and finally occupied the throne and crown of Charlemagne with honour and dignity, for thirteen years before his death.

I have been in no edifice where the gray walls give rise to an equally long and interesting train of historical musing, as that which is excited in the

Ritter-saal, or hall of the knights, in the castle of Habsburg.

In tracing the history of the family from the death of Rudolph, the mind is soon led to a scene of deep tragedy, and the place of its occurrence lies before the eyes. Upon the spot where the high altar of the convent of St. Clara at Königsfelden is raised, expired the emperor Albert, under the weapon of his kinsman. But this first scene of the tragedy is far exceeded by the dreadful and vindictive retaliation upon the supposed abettors of the conspiracy ; during which, it is computed that upwards of 1,000 men, women, and children, were murdered by the sons and daughters of the deceased monarch. Königsfelden was founded by the principal actress in this massacre, Agnes of Hungary, and here she subsequently took up her abode and occupied herself in the duties of her religion.

As I drew towards my journey's end, I found the whole country busy with the vintage. The landscape was every where chequered and enlivened by the active figures and cheerful faces of the peasants and their families ; and the different operations connected with their harvest afforded me much amusement. The grapes are here crushed by large mallets or pestles, immediately after being taken from the rows and thrown into the tubs. This is a cleaner and more alluring, though perhaps less ancient and poetical mode of proceeding (and certainly less amusing) than that of *treading the wine-press*, which, to my great astonishment, I saw literally performed in open day-light, last autumn, near Basle. There, the same end was brought about in the following manner. At about the distance of every hundred

yards, as I suppose, opposite each peasant's vineyard, two or three large tubs were placed, each surmounted by a smaller, the bottom of which was perforated like a strainer. Into the latter, the baskets of fruit were emptied as they were brought from the rows; good, bad, and indifferent; dust, stalks, and spiders; while on them stood an old woman or little boy, perched on high, with bare legs and feet, stamping, and treading, and mashing the contents, which came oozing out below into the great tub. However—I am told the wine is just as well flavoured and as pure the one way as the other; and it is my interest to think so: for it ill-becomes a pedestrian to feel squeamish about any thing.

CHAPTER VI.

“ For so it falls out
That what we have, we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it: but being lacked and lost,
Why then we rack the value: then we find
The virtue that possession would not shew us
Whiles it was ours.”

It may have been observed, that, during these wanderings, I not only, as much as possible, avoided towns, but have shunned the description of them whenever they may have come in my way. For this, many reasons may be assigned—one I will mention here. That very state of mind and of outward equipment that rendered me capable of meeting all circumstances, when among the wilds of the Alps, which not only made me the more susceptible of every enjoyment, but indifferent or superior to all the discomforts, privations, or even perils of my solitary pathway; these very things disqualified me, in a measure, from entering upon the examination of the abodes and of the works of man, with that spirit and enthusiasm, without which little could be enjoyed at the time by myself, and still less recorded by the memory, for the amusement of others.

Man and his works were not, at that time, the objects of my study or pursuit; and though I took pleasure in them, as far as they formed a part of the delicious pictures I had before me, I could not bring

myself to linger among them at that time more than was necessary. I grudged every moment that robbed me of the contemplation of those majestic scenes which were then within my grasp, and, I did not know how soon, might pass from my sight for ever.

Yet, now that the white Alps have long faded from my horizon, and I have ceased to occupy a place in that little world in which it pleased God I should spend a portion of my life, I perhaps may be permitted to make an exception.

At the end of October I had returned from Berne and the Oberland, whither I repaired again for a few days subsequent to my journey through the NE. of Switzerland; and now settled seriously and quietly down in my old winter quarters and to my winter occupations at Neuchâtel.

On my arrival the vintage was over; and the vineyards, lately the scene of so much life and gaiety, now lay brown and unsightly, upon the flanks of the mountain and border of the lake. The forest trees in the neighbourhood of the town, and the brush-wood on the wide and steep acclivity of the Chaumont, were still decked in that splendid but transient livery which one frosty night's keen and motionless breath, or a few hours' tempest, must strew on the earth.

There is something strangely moving in the few last short and tranquil days of autumn, as they often intervene between a period of tempestuous weather and the commencement of the frosts. The face of nature is still sunny, and bright, and beautiful; the forest still yields its shade, and the sun glistens warm and clear upon the flower and stained

leaf. Then there is the gorgeous autumnal sunset closing the short day; and, in this land of the lake and mountain, it is indeed a scene of enchantment. There is the rich tinge of the broad red sun stealing over and blending the thousand hues of the hill and forest; and the flood of glory upon the sky above and lake beneath; while the snows of the Alps are glowing like molten ore—I fancy I see it still—and it warms my heart's blood.

A few more days, and then rises the blast, howling through the pine forest, and over the mountain side; shaking from the tree its fair foliage, roughening the surface of the lake, and drawing over the sky a curtain of thick vapours, that narrows the horizon by day, and shuts out the stars by night. And I too, however unwillingly, shall bid adieu for the present to the fairer portions of the year, to the songs of spring, the bright suns of summer, and the fair but fleeting beauties of autumn. I have done with wandering, for some pages to come; and though I may occasionally peep out of my quarters, allured by a sunny day, or even undeterred by a stormy one, in the quest of a little wholesome exercise, to get rid of a trifling indisposition, or to shake from me a heavy thought, and may perhaps give my reader a glimpse of what meets my view, I could wish him to share the quiet and the rest which this season of the year again brought me.

Neuchâtel is situated at the southern foot of the Jura, on the margin of a lake of about eight leagues long, and averaging two in breadth. It has often struck me as singular, that, search the whole northern shore of this lake, and you will hardly find

another spot equally ill-suited for the position of a town. There is scarcely a point where the mountains descend more abruptly to the water's edge; while, either to the right or left, the country is comparatively open, especially below Boudry, and beyond St. Blaise.

It is probable, considering all circumstances, that the site was determined in the same manner as that of many other towns and villages, by the neighbourhood of a castle; and for the erection of such a structure, especially in the middle ages, the chief requirements, as far as locality is concerned, were, as may be readily understood, facility of defence and difficulty of approach.

Nevertheless, however ill-calculated such a position might be for the site of a town, when the strong-hold was once there, there was always sufficient allurements in the promise of protection or of gain which it held out, to induce the inhabitants of the open country to flock by degrees to its more immediate neighbourhood.

The Roman town of Noidolex is supposed to have been situated a little more to the NE. Here the lake has encroached considerably on the former shore, and no remnants of its existence are to be traced.

The present town principally occupies the slopes of two hills. Between these the river Seyon issues into the lake, from a narrow gully in which it runs for about a mile, after passing from the Val de Ruz through the very heart of the advanced ridge of the Jura, in the deep defiles of Vallengin and Vaux-Seyon. The summit of the western and larger eminence was occupied in the twelfth century by

two convents and a castle. Of these no remnant is traceable, to my knowledge. The present church and castle are erected on their site. The castle consists of a quadrangle of some antiquity, with other buildings attached, and, towards the north, directly overhangs the deep gully of the Seyon.

The High church is a large and handsome edifice, apparently built at various times. The nave is the Gothic of the fourteenth century, while the east end is allied in form and detail to the singular style known in these countries under the term Byzantine, from its eastern origin. It is said to have been founded towards the end of the twelfth century, on the ruins of a very ancient chapel dedicated to the Virgin.

After the church and castle, three towers, of greater or less antiquity, the Tour de Diesse, the Tour des Prisons, and the Tour des Chavannes, are the most prominent and venerable objects.

I believe that, even within the memory of man, Neuchâtel consisted solely of the buildings upon the steep slope of the castle-hill, and on that of its neighbour, including the space between them; that is to say, of the street called *la Grande Rue*, *la Rue des Moulins*, *la Rue du Château*, and *la Rue des Chavannes*: the tower at the upper extremity of the last mentioned forming the eastern defence of the town. At that time the lake occupied almost all the intermediate space. Little by little, however, a large extent of ground has been rescued from its waters, partly from the depositions of gravel and earth brought down from the mountains by the Seyon and left in the neighbourhood of its estuary, and partly by driving piles into the lake, and filling up the intervals. In this manner, the greater part

of the eastern and lower portions of the town, of its fauxbourg and promenades, have been added from time to time.

As to the buildings, there is nothing very remarkable about them in general; and, as I am not writing a guide-book, I shall mention none, except casually.

Though the appearance of Neuchâtel, at a distance, cannot be said to be peculiarly striking, as the height of the ridges immediately behind detract from the otherwise commanding appearance and position of the castle-hill, yet it is far from being tame and uninteresting.

Nothing could exceed the general quiet and tranquillity of this little town during the winter months. Frequently one day after another passed over my head without my attention being enticed away from my occupation, by any sound betokening the neighbourhood of my fellow-creatures. To be sure, one day in the week there was an extraordinary bustle upon the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, near which my quarters were situated, from the numerous members of *le grand conseil*, distinguishable by their swords and cloaks, repairing to or from their council. Then, perchance, the town crier would, from time to time, parade the quiet streets with his drum, to announce some article found, lost, or missing. It appeared that the less important the affair to be announced, the heavier fell his blows during the prelude by which he solicited attention.

The police was well ordered, and very peaceably inclined, which is a matter of some consequence if they are to keep the peace. The lower orders, as

far as I could judge, gave but little cause for their interference.

Thursday, however, being the market day, never failed to be accompanied by a degree of racket, bustle and crush, which formed a curious and amusing contrast to the ordinary tranquillity just alluded to.

By an early hour of the morning, the market-place, and other more open parts of the town on the edge of the lake, presented a very lively and bustling scene. Numerous boats crowded the little port, having for the most part crossed the lake from the opposite shores of Friburg and Berne, which almost entirely supply the canton of Neuchâtel with vegetables and poultry. The groups of peasantry thickened in the neighbourhood of the landing place, with their articles of traffic spread out before them. One part of the open area near the port was allotted to the peasants of the Jura, who descend the steep sides of the mountains with their rude vehicles drawn by oxen, and supply the market with firewood and charcoal. The vociferation of the buyers and sellers, and the lowing of the poor oxen, to whom the termination of the first part of their day's labour brought no relaxation from the heavy yoke which fastened the heads of the couple immovably together, predominated during the earlier part of the morning.

But as the day advanced, these sounds were invariably overpowered by the pigs, whose unceasing cries and screams of sorrow and perplexity puzzled me not a little till I found out the cause. I never happened to buy a pig myself, but I think I have seen many bought and sold, and some few killed,

before I quitted the north. I do not recollect, however, that in the English markets any particular kind of 'pomp and circumstance' attends the purchase of a pig. As far as I can recollect the buyer thumps it a little to see that the animal is solid, and the seller pinches its ear or tail to shew that it has sound lungs; then a bargain is struck, and the purchaser conveys it straightway to his home, and kills it privily or publicly, just as it suits him. But not so here. I had noticed that, some hours during the middle of the day, the air was burdened with the cries of this animal, with hardly a moment's intermission; and that these sounds proceeded from a certain *maison de péage* not far from my dwelling. To unravel this mystery, I at length directed my steps to this building, and there soon came fully to understand the whole matter. Pigs are here bought by the weight—that is part of the mystery. Consequently, all that are brought for sale, whether big or little, are tugged off in full vigour to the public scales, tumbled into them, and weighed before purchased. Further, all animals of this species which the pleasure of the possessor may consign to the knife, are put to death in one and the same building, on the border of the lake, by order of the magistrates. Both these operations of killing and weighing are often carried on together; and it will be understood that of the two animals, that which is only weighed screams much longer, if not much louder, than the one whose last hour is come. The din defies all description. Towards evening, the boats begin to leave the port, and to stretch for the opposite shore, and little by little the town resumes its tranquillity.

Four times a year, fairs, each of several days' continuance, are held ; and, as might be supposed, these bring bustle enough in their train. The centre of the market-place is then occupied by a double line of substantial booths, erected for the purpose, and let out to the different speculators, who flock in from every part of the neighbouring cantons. It appears that there is a class of tradespeople, or rather pedlars on a large scale, who have no fixed place of abode, but make the round of all the fairs, and bring their ventures to each market in turn. Amusing as a scene of this kind must be in any small town, the generality of other Swiss fairs are infinitely more striking and gay, from the prevalence of different and peculiar costumes, which are but sparingly mingled with the throng in Neuchâtel. The canton itself has no national costume.

During the latter months of the year, the great roads through the country, and the town itself, are rendered more than usually lively, by the number of wains passing from the French frontier to that of the canton of Berne, at the Pont de Thiele, laden with the wines of Lower Burgundy and the neighbouring departments. Though free passage is given to these speculators, the strictest watch is kept up by the police, that none of the wine is unladen and disposed of in the canton ; as that would materially injure the sale of the wines of the country, which, as it is, hang heavy enough upon the proprietors of the vineyards.

The Burgundian carriers generally collect in a considerable body at Les Verrieres on the French frontier, enter the canton with their train of waggon under the surveillance of the police, and pro-

ceed through the Val de Travers to Brod, a small village at the crest of the pass, over the advanced chain of the Jura. Here they are obliged by law to pass the night, and to proceed the following day down to the shores of the lake, through Neuchâtel, and to cross the frontiers at the Pont de Thiele before sunset. The canton of Berne is at present the principal market for these wines, which are for the most part *vin ordinaire*. These Burgundian waggons are distinguishable by their dark blue smock-frocks and horse-furniture. It is very enlivening to see their long train moving up and down the rocky shores of the lake, and to hear the continued jingle of their team-bells.

But I approach the close of the year; a season which cannot be described as possessing any very distinct feature in this country, any more than our own. The first winter I passed in Neuchâtel, that of 1824-5, was uncommonly mild, and so particularly free from thick vapours or fogs, that there were but few days during the course of it when the greater part of the chain of the Alps was not to be descried from our shore, morning, noon, or night.

This winter was distinguished by terrific storms in the north of Europe, and vast quantities of rain must have fallen at intervals both in the Jura and in the Alps, as all the lakes at the foot of both chains were in the course of the year more or less swollen, and poured their surplus waters down into the low countries with such violence, that for a considerable time we heard of little but devastation and disaster in the countries bordering the Rhine and the Rhone. At this period the lakes of Neuchâtel,

Morat, and Bienne, formed one wide extended and irregular sheet of water, all the morasses lying between them being covered. During the whole course of the winter months, as far as I recollect, there was only one short frost, with a single fall of snow.

The following year, 1825-6, we had a winter of more severity. The *Bize*, or NE. wind, set in early in January, and prepared the way for a severe frost in the course of the following month, which continued till the surface of the lake exhibited a mass of irregular and disjointed fields of ice. With the close of the month, however, the winter seemed this year also to have spent its force. During the early part of the season the prevailing wind was that called the *Vent*, from the SW., a mild, steady, but strong wind; and towards the close, the *Bize* blew more or less violently, almost without cessation. The former was generally attended by an overcast and troubled sky; it came sweeping over the entire length of the lake, which, during its continuance, put on its wildest and most imposing appearance. One line of white breakers after another might be descried in the distance, bearing past the headland of Colombier, and advancing upon the moles and quay of the little town; and day and night, their ceaseless dash was heard against the piers and jetties, and the splash of the water thrown high over the barriers erected to withstand and repulse them. Still the *Bize* was the wind which produced the most beautiful effect upon both land and water, as it was usually accompanied by unclouded skies, and bright clear atmosphere; though agitated, the lake was less turbulent, and nothing

could exceed the intensity of the blue which overspread the whole body of water, or the sparkling brilliancy of the little white breakers that wandered, and rose, and sunk, and reappeared upon its agitated surface.

The depth of the lake of Neuchâtel * varies greatly. It is greatest off the shore near Bevais, being upwards of 490 feet, 82 fathom; off the mouth of the Reuse, 71 fathom; and generally speaking, the deep line runs very near the Jura shore. Midway the depth is comparatively inconsiderable; for instance, between Bevais and Portalban it shallows to six fathoms.

The extreme rapidity with which this considerable body of water is observed to rise in height after any continuance of rainy weather, may appear rather singular, considering the comparative insignificance of the streams which give it its ostensible supply.—The Orbe, the Areuse, the Seyon, and the Broye, are the only streams of any volume falling into the lake, either from the side of the Jura, or of the cantons of Friburg and Berne. The Thiele, it is true, is the only outlet, and it cannot be disputed that this, though a deep and rapid stream, would be hardly sufficient to carry off the accumulation of water, with rapidity proportioned to the visible means of supply in very wet weather, though perfectly adequate in ordinary seasons, when the Seyon, for instance, becomes either nearly or quite dry. Yet even allowing that in very wet weather the influx is considerably greater from these streams than the volume carried off by the Thiele,

* Lake of Neuchâtel, 1,435 feet above the sea.

and that the general level of the lake will in consequence be raised ; yet I do not conceive it possible to account for the uncommon and sudden rise of its waters, if the agency of these feeders alone be taken into account.

Between the 15th of April and 25th of May, 1824, the lake rose four feet. After retiring by the end of September to an ordinary level, it again rose four feet before the end of the year. It is always observed to rise much more rapidly than to subside, whence there can be no doubt that the inlet is much greater than the outlet.

It is probable that the lake is mainly fed by the waters of streams escaping below its general level from the base of the mountains. It is understood that the whole mass of high limestone mountains rising over the lakes of Neuchâtel and Bienne contains numerous and vast natural excavations, which form the reservoirs of all the waters falling or springing in the higher ranges of the chain, and their intermediate valleys. The streams of these higher parts are always found to make their exit below the surface ; and beside these facts, there are many other phenomena known to occur from time to time among the mountains, which prove beyond a doubt the existence of such subterranean reservoirs. I might offer many facts in proof of this, but none appear more obvious than the simple result of an examination of the sources of most of the larger streams in the country. They are chiefly found to burst out of the rubbish at the foot of the higher and more central ridges of the Jura, with a strength, clearness, and invariable flow of current, which could never be the case if they were not fed by the overflow of ex-

tensive reservoirs situated on a higher level. Again, in rainy seasons the water is observed in many instances to rise up in bubbling fountains through the grass and rubbish in the bottom of the *combes*, and torrents to rush out from the bowels of the mountains. The surplus waters of many of these caverns, in parts of the chain where their existence cannot be doubted, from the fact of the waters on the surface being precipitated into the bowels of the mountain, as at La Brevine, Le Locle, La Chaux de Fonds, and in the Val de Sagne, are ascertained with considerable certainty to form the sources of many of the streams of the lower country*.

The distant view of the Alps in the depth of winter—when not only the glaciers, properly so called, but both the main chain and the advanced and varied range of the Friburg mountains are covered with snow to their very base even at times when a comparatively open winter leaves the rest of the landscape free from it—is at sunset one of the most glorious spectacles in nature.

When the sharpening air and reddening sunlight gave token of a clear frosty sunset, I frequently turned my steps up the Chaumont, or highest ridge of the

* In this manner it is probable that the waters of the tarns and streamlets of La Clusatte, and La Brevine, after passing through the caverns and interior channels of the mountains to a much lower level, join with others to give rise to the sources of the Reuse in the defiles of St. Sulpice: those in the Val de Sagne losing themselves in the earth in the same manner, to form upon their re-appearance the torrent at Noiraigue; and I might mention those of Le Locle, and La Chaux de Fonds, supposed to make their re-appearance near the Doubs;—but I would refer the reader to M. De Luc's Geological Travels in the Jura for better proofs than I can give, and for much more information.

mountains at the back of the town. The foot-way up this mountain runs diagonally over the steep flanks, passing alternately through three sheltered breaks or dells in its breast. These dells are formed by vast tabular masses of the limestone-strata having slipped down over each other towards the hollow of the lakes. Above these the main ridge of the mountain rises to a great height, for the most part covered with a tall brushwood, interspersed towards the summit by pines, increasing in number and size; here they continue to intersect the pastures by patches of greater or less magnitude. From the part of the ridge called the Signal, elevated 2,300 feet above the town, the spectator looks down upon the whole extent of the noble sheet of water stretching far to the SW. and bounded at the nearer extremity by the dark brown and level line of morasses, extending in three divisions towards Morat, Anet, and Landeron. Here and there, a market-boat may appear, a moving speck upon its bosom, slowly advancing across the lake to or from the ports of Cudrefin or Portalban, or following the bend of the nearer shore towards the village of St. Blaise. To the right appears the town, with its castellated hill and busy little port; and to the left the villages of St. Blaise, Marin, Thiele, and Landeron. The Lake of Bienne, with the island of St. Pierre, and the lake of Morat, are perfectly distinguishable. The town of Morat appears beyond the Vuilly, a singular hill rising towards the NE. extremity of the lake of Neuchâtel. Beyond all these intermediate objects, and the wide stretch of varied country between the Jura and the Alps, which, even in winter, preserves much of the peculiarity of its character, though partially covered

with snow, from the broken and varied nature of the ground and sprinkling of forest which covers every height, the broad wide-stretched and elevated horizon is formed by the long and glowing line of snow mountains. As the beams of the setting sun slowly retire from the intermediate country, the chain of the central Alps glows with a brightness and brilliancy of colour which no words can describe, and no painting imitate.

Are they really belonging to this earth? is a thought which has arisen to my lips, time after time, as I gazed upon them, balanced, as it were, in the air—so distinct, so bright, so beautiful, so exquisitely glorious, while the rest of the earth lay enveloped in dusky and gray obscurity.

With the commencement of a new year, the inhabitants of Neuchâtel fall into their usual course of evening parties and *sociétés*, which continue without any considerable break till Easter. These seem to supply the necessary quantum of winter amusement in a general way to the Neuchâtelois, without there being much desire for more public amusements; and it speaks well for the character of the people. The magistrates have long denied their consent to public theatrical representations, and thereby done themselves much credit; for, in a small town like this, their influence could hardly fail to be more than commonly pernicious.

A series of amateur concerts has been usually got up during the first months of the year, by a number of the gentlemen of the town and its vicinity, under the direction of an associate of the King of Bavaria's chapel, and afforded a source of much amusement to the inhabitants.

The mountaineers of the canton of Neuchâtel have long been renowned for their skill in mechanics, and particularly in the manufacture of watches and mathematical-instruments.

Of late years the canton has been able to boast some of the best artists in Switzerland. The works of Lory Max. de Meuron, Moritz, and d'Ostervald, are well known to tourists, and each possesses his peculiar claims to talent and excellence. Robert, a native of these mountains, and a young artist of great genius, at present at Rome, is becoming celebrated on the continent. Many of his pictures are distinguished by great originality of conception and truth of colouring. It appears to me that the style and colouring of the Swiss artists has hardly had justice done to it in England. I would not pretend to maintain that Swiss views, magnificent as they are in themselves, are as well calculated, with their freshness of tone, astonishing display of minute detail, and often rude and harsh brilliancy of colouring, to form fine pictures, as the mellowed and deep hues and voluptuous outline of an Italian landscape; yet this may be asserted, that many of the works of the best class of artists are faithful, spirited, and clever copies of the natural features and peculiar tone of the region they profess to represent, and as such have their value.

There is really but little to be remarked with regard to the temper of the various classes of society. It has seemed to me that the noblesse have in general more affection for that part of their government which is monarchical, and the burghers to that which may be called republican: the former priding themselves on being Prussian subjects, and the latter members of the Helvetic Confederacy.

The occupation of the majority of the lowest class is the culture of the vineyards. They inhabit the Rue des Chevannes and the parts adjacent at the back of the town.

Instances of the commission of serious crime are very uncommon, and the regulations of the town are well calculated to prevent the frequent occurrence of minor offences.

Inebriety may be common, as elsewhere, but it does not walk as often in open day, or startle the good Neuchâtelois from their first sleep so frequently as in most other towns. Now and then, at the close of a market-day, a straggler may be seen tacking slowly homewards, and proving, by his frequent bewilderment, the potency of the *vin ordinaire* of the canton, or the weakness of his own head and struggle against temptation. In general, however, I may assert, that I have seen more intoxication in a single day in many an English town than in six entire months here.

The production of wine, and the dull market for its exportation, entail one evil upon the canton and town, that of every facility being given for its consumption in the country itself. The consequence is, the authorization of a vast number of so-called *pintes*, where the wine of the different vineyards is disposed of to the lower classes. Still it is but justice to add, that the regulations to which these are subject are a great check against their abuse. All *pintes* and cabarets, being first emptied of the individuals sitting in them, close at nine o'clock in the evening, when what may be termed the curfew-bell tolls from the Tower of Diesse.

In speaking of the lower class of this town, I should not omit to make mention of two important classes of functionaries, formed among the female part of their body, for the general convenience of the town at large—I mean the *blanchisseuses* (the washerwomen), and the *repasseuses* (the laundresses). The operations of the first mentioned are carried on in all seasons upon the beach, to the right of the Seyon and of the pier which runs down the side of the river till its stream comes into a more open part of the lake. The shore here bends considerably off to the west, forming a sloping, semicircular, and pebbly beach, surmounted by a promenade with limes and sycamores, fronting the Grande Place de Marché. Here they may be seen, in fair weather, in summer and winter, from morning to night, with their tubs, and lines, and linen. I may mention what had drawn my attention to them in particular. When, either from the state of the weather or from settled occupation, but a few minutes in the course of the day could be devoted to needful air and exercise, the pier just mentioned offered a dry, airy, and agreeable promenade. It commands a very fair view of the town and its castle and church, with the *Place d'Armes* on one side, and the little bay just mentioned, with its groups of women, and clothes-lines pendant from tree to tree. And from the very first day I made choice of this for my brief quantum of exercise, to the very last time I perambulated it from end to end, I never failed to reap amusement, and to find a stimulus to my astonishment, from the continual and surprising hubbub of voices that rose from this legal field of female labour and vociferation.

I should never have had a true idea of the powers of the female voice, or the strength and durability of female lungs, if I had not had the opportunity of witnessing the performance of the *blanchisseuses* of Neuchâtel. And when the wind was tempestuous, and set full upon the shore, so that I was glad to button my coat up to my throat, and take wary steps, lest a sudden gust might drive me over the edge of my narrow path-way; and the lake was boiling and bursting incessantly on the beach, and the boughs of the trees on the promenade clashing and swaying to and fro, and the linen on the lines fluttering and flapping in the gale,—instead of holding their mouths shut to keep the wind out, the zeal which filled the hearts of this bevy of fair dames was such, that their shrill and powerful clack always rose above all the tumult of sounds which filled the air.

The other class do not, it is true, perform their duties in public; but I have been informed by more than one mistress of a family, who, having just had her *great wash*, had been compelled to employ each corps in turn, that the *repasseuses* are not a whit inferior to the other body in strength of lungs and glibness of utterance; and that for the day of their sojourn in the premises, any hope of quiet or of decent silence must be entirely relinquished.

As far as I can recollect, these two branches of the community are the only ones which strike a stranger as peculiar for their organization, appearance, manners, or conduct. Perhaps I might still add the *corps of watchmen*, whose singularly lugubrious and mournful mode of announcing the hours has made an impression on my memory which I shall hardly

ever lose. Seek the whole gamut through, you will scarcely find a set of sounds more thoroughly disheartening and gloomy, than those which have been chosen from time immemorial by this worshipful and useful race of men, to give token of their vigilance and the swift lapse of time. The deep and sepulchral note breathed from the horn of the watchman of many German towns for the same purpose is nothing to it.

The vineyards occupy all the earthy slopes at the foot of the Jura, and such parts of the mountain to a considerable height as afford sufficient depth of rubbish to give root to the vine. The class of lands, adapted by their soil and position for this culture, are divided into three divisions, the *terres fortes* producing the greatest quantity, the *terres moyennes* yielding the best quality, and the *terres légères*. The vineyards are not measured by the acre, but by the number of labourers required to keep them in perfect cultivation: and are valued diversely, from 800 and even 1,000 Swiss francs, to 150 francs *per ouvrier*. The labourers are also paid very differently, according to the contract made with the proprietor; some by the day, the week, or the year, others by a certain proportion of the produce of the vintage, whether above or below an average crop. The red wine of this canton, of the best growth, and of good years, is an excellent Burgundy, and fetches a high price.

A short walk from the west gate of the town, following the road to Boudry and Yverdun, lies the little village of Serrières. Arriving at this point,

over the moderate undulations which mark the inclined slope of the mountain towards the water, the stranger is surprised to find himself at the brink of a profound but confined hollow, running about a furlong into the breast of the acclivity above him, and below terminating with the lake. Over this the road is carried by a stone bridge of a single arch. At the bottom of this dell rolls a strong and powerful torrent, turning many mills, both above and below the bridge, and soon ending its brief but vigorous course by falling into the lake. This is one of the most remarkable streams of the singular class before alluded to. Its visible source is at the extremity of this dell, certainly not ten minutes' walk from the lake. There the water bubbles up from the earth in many distinct jets, covering several square yards of the bottom, and flowing off with a strength to turn a mill within a couple of hundred yards of its first appearance. Nothing is known as to the earlier course of this stream in the mountains above, or from what source it gets its never-failing supply.

M. de Luc and others have entertained the idea, that there was a connection between it and a torrent, now and then bursting out of the mountain side, near St. Martin, in the Val de Ruz, many leagues higher up the country. Of this I shall speak in another place.

Sunday, the day of rest, possessed many distinguishing features in this canton, to a much greater degree than in most of the Protestant towns in Germany, where, except in the short interval of morning worship, trade and shopping may go on much as

usual. Here no such thing is permitted; and, during divine worship, the town is kept perfectly quiet by the barriers being closed, and no vehicles being allowed to pass through the streets. Both the high church, and that in the lower part of the town, are made use of at different times in the course of the forenoon and afternoon for public worship. The morning service is in the former, and consists, as in the Protestant church of Berne, of a short service and sermon.

The organs of both churches are large and good, especially that in the lower one. The style of psalmody resembles in some respect that of the kirk of Scotland. In Neuchâtel this part of the service is well conducted, but in some of the surrounding villages, the singing might vie with that of many village churches in England, for want of harmony and taste. There are two or three villages particularly, where the grievous nature of the psalmody defies all description; and yet I was often assured that it had changed vastly for the better within a few years before my visit to the canton. In illustration of this, I was informed, that, on one occasion, a stranger like myself making his appearance in the church, the clerk or some other individual of the congregation was so far conscious of the peculiar nature of the village singing, and so considerate of the nerves of the intruder, that stepping to him just as they were going to strike up, he whispered in Swiss German, *Seyd ihr nüt erschrokke, wir werde bald singe*: which answers in English to ‘*Don’t be frightened out of your wits, we are going to sing.*’

In addition to the terms *curé* and *vicaire*, the former of which perversely enough corresponds to our

vicar, and the latter to our curate, I cannot avoid mentioning, that the common people of this neighbourhood have a term to designate a still lower degree of ecclesiastical honour. It happens that the curate may be now and then assisted in his duties by a young candidate for the ministry, or *proposant*, as they are properly termed. To this class the common people have whimsically enough given the name of *l'apôtre*: and though I do not understand that any ridicule is implied by it, I must own I do not think that any increase of respect is attached to the designation; for, to a question put to one of the peasants as to the rank of the preacher, it is not unusual to get for answer, *Il n'est qu'apôtre!*

Not far from the Pont de Thiele, about five miles distant from Neuchâtel, on the route towards Berne, lies the Chateau of Montmirail, formerly the property of a branch of the noble family of *De Watteville*. It has since been transferred to the church of the United Brethren (or Moravians), who have here a large and flourishing establishment for the education of females.

The view of the Alps from this end of the lake, though essentially the same as that from Neuchâtel, is in one point at least yet more splendid. The Jungfrau and the Eigers, which are from all points the fairest portion of the panorama, from their exquisite outline and comparative proximity, are seen from Montmirail to yet more advantage than from Neuchâtel, where higher portions of the opposite shore obstruct the view in some measure. Here, the level middle ground afforded by the marshes allows of an unobstructed view even to their base.

How often, during my frequent ramble in this

direction, and with what unabated admiration, have I watched the progress of that brief but exquisite half-hour at the close of day, when, at the same time that the glooms of coming night were fast gathering in the broken country to the north and east, and the twilight creeping up the steep escarpment of the Jura, the setting sun still blazed upon the sides and snowy scalps of the Alps before us, soaring in such splendid distinctness above the shadows thickening round their bases. And even long after the last red gleam had ceased to paint the peaks of the Finster-aarhorn among the Berne Alps, and the whole of the landscape to the eastward had become blended into one indistinct and fading mass, the eye still rested upon the broad head of Mont Blanc, gleaming like a beacon tower above the southern horizon, from a distance of a hundred miles. Still later, when the full round moon rising over the Jolimont, and throwing its calm light upon the extremity of the lake, and on the surface of the still and treacherous Thiele, afforded me the promise of a cheerful road homewards, it was my custom to commence my return to my quarters in the town.

On that solitary road I have witnessed many a glorious display of the beauty, majesty, and grandeur with which God has decked this earth, both by day and night. Such were the gorgeous sunset—the silver moon shedding its tranquil beams on the lake and mountain—the clear, sparkling starlight-heaven, with the occasional gleam of the passing meteor darting across it—the snow storm—the fearful tempest sailing in the twilight over the darkened country, its strange and awful shades shifting on the surface of the water—and the bitter winter's

gale, when the *Bize noire* covered the lake with dense fog, out of which the dim and swollen surge came heaving on to the frozen beach.

At St. Blaise, a considerable village between Montmirail and Neuchâtel, the shore trends considerably to the SE.; and, in consequence, a large tract of open country intervenes between the lower end of the lake and the foot of the Jura. In this interval lie six or seven villages and hamlets, besides Montmirail and Cornaux already mentioned. Landeron and Cressier, the two Roman Catholic villages of the canton, are both upon the edge of this open tract. The church of the latter is exquisitely situated, on a knoll at the termination of a long wooded defile passing through the rocky eminences at the back, towards the open country.

In the winter of 1824-5, alluded to in the first chapter of these sketches, it was difficult to determine if there were really an interval of any duration, between the last protracted signs of autumn, and the earliest indications of the approach of spring. For, I remember, that far in December I still saw the pale flowers of the wood pink (*dianthus sylvestris*) and the gentian (*gentiana ciliata*) gemming the moist borders of the forests; and on one of the earliest days in January, I plucked the first sweet-scented violets from a sheltered situation, as the delightful harbingers of the swift advance of the reviving season. The greater severity of the second winter, (*that* whose blank this chapter is properly designed to fill up), did not afford an opportunity of observing this in the same remarkable degree: yet, no sooner had the violence of our February's

frost and snow-storm subsided, and the earth began to loosen in the succeeding thaws, than the signs and promises of an early spring were perceivable on every side.

The first breaking up of the frosts is perhaps the most disagreeable period in the whole circle of the seasons, accompanied, as it frequently is, by windy and rainy weather. While the surface of the ground is soft and wet, the frost still reigns below, and forms a crust through which none of the water floating on the surface can sink into its natural channels.

I often commiserated the market people, who, after a grievous tossing on the surface of the lake, came to post themselves in the wet and comfortless streets; whence, after a heavy drenching, and probably a bad market, they betook themselves again to their boats, to row for their lives, in the twilight, to the opposite shore. Then there were the oxen, with the heavy yoke on their horns, lying upon the street, while the stream rippled hour after hour against their sides: it even appeared to me that the porkers sung in a more melancholy key during a thaw, than at other times.

The only part of the animate creation that really seemed to consider this kind of weather as provided for their benefit and enjoyment, were the mews, a race of birds attached to the lake, of which I may therefore make mention. Some hundreds of this species seemed to consider our portion of the shore as their provision ground; for, after watching them very narrowly, I could never find that they built their nests on this side. I think that the steep, soft, and sandy line of beach on the opposite shore contains

their habitations. However, it matters little where they nestled, I know well where they fed. The slaughter-house of the town is situated on the *Pont des Boucheries* over the Seyon, and, as may be readily supposed, the point where that river issues into the lake was the favourite resort of this little carnivorous tribe. A thaw brought down a heavier body of water through the river, and consequently a larger and more speedy supply of dainties for their entertainment was carried into the lake; and the more impetuous the flood, the greater seemed to be their enjoyment.

When the lake was in the greatest agitation, assailing the sides of the pier and leaping incessantly over its termination; and the Seyon swept along with a swollen and turbid current, which might be traced by its colour far out into the blue reservoir;—then some hundreds of these birds might be seen in constant motion on the surface of the water just beyond the pier; hovering, and sailing, and dipping, and tacking to and fro in the air, with ready claws and eager beak, prompt to dart upon their food as soon as descried. It was really beautiful to see their grace and agility, as they swayed backwards and forwards on the wind, in unison with the rocking wave, with their glistening black eye intent upon the water. When they discovered their prey, a sudden swoop and an instant's flutter on the surface, brought the object within their power. This species resembles the sea-mew in every respect except size. At night-fall they all vanished from our line of coast.

But, to return to the season. A few days passed over—no sooner had the thaw become really effect-

ive, and the ground freed from the superabundance of moisture, and the sun able to evince his increase of power by the dispersion of the vapours, than the whole spirit of the scene, and the feeling throughout both animate and inanimate nature, seemed to undergo a sudden and total change.

If no very severe check occurred from morning frosts, a few weeks strewed the open spots in the woods with thousands of hepatica, (*anemone hepatica*); the broken rocky ground near Cornaux put forth its profusion of the *scilla bifolia*, and the drip white *leucojum vernum*; and the woolly calix of the *anemone pulsatilla* appeared on the rocks impending over the Vallengines. It would be easy to go on leaf after leaf to detail the gradual development of the numberless beauties of the season and country, but I must not multiply pictures, as, before I turn my steps and observation towards the Alps again, there are several points in this canton which should be adverted to.

Following the line of the Chaumont, to the north-east the eye is soon arrested by the long elevated ridge of the Chasseral*, soaring over the lake of Biemme, to the height of 3,860 feet. On the north side of this mountain lie the sources of the Seyon, and in following the course of this river the traveler is conducted, by the back of the Chaumont and its adjoining ridges, to the fair and spacious Val de Ruz, without exception the most fertile tract of cultivated land in this portion of the Jura. Through the greater portion of this valley the river passes be-

* Chasseral, 5,295 feet above the sea.

fore entering the deep defiles of Vallengin at the back of Neuchâtel.

The Val de Ruz contains upwards of twenty larger and smaller villages, besides the small town and castle of Vallengin. It is surrounded on all sides by the ridges of the Jura. In the range opposite the pass of the Seyon at Vallengin, the Tête de Rang* rises upwards of 3,000 feet above the lake of Neuchâtel.

Vallengin was at one time a place of considerable strength and consequence, and the capital of a territory perfectly distinct from that of Neuchâtel. The castle is used as a prison and court-house, and though the principal buildings are comparatively modern, there are portions of an erection of old date still remaining.

The passage of the Seyon, from Vallengin† to Vaux Seyon, is one of the most singular of the many remarkable scenes of this kind found among the Jura. After flowing, as just mentioned, through the main portion of the Val de Ruz, it turns short after passing Vallengin, and enters the narrow and profound cleft, which some mighty force has here produced, through the heart of the advanced chain separating the Val de Ruz from the lake, and runs deeper and deeper through its recesses, till it escapes into the open day-light again, at the opposite flank of the mountain. It then turns at right angles to the line of its previous course, and forcing a passage through a short collateral valley almost parallel with the shore, escapes round the foot of the castle

* Tête de Rang, 4,682 feet above the sea.

† Town of Vallengin, 2,140 feet above the sea, and 700 above the lake.

hill, and through the town into the lake. The high road from Vallengin to Neuchâtel runs over a shoulder of the mountain, above the rocks on the east of this profound chasm.

One very peculiar feature of these mountains is the immense boulder-stones of primitive rock spread in every direction over their surface. They are most commonly gneiss and granite, and occur every where in the forests and on the slopes near Neuchâtel. One of those in the forest, at Pierre à Bot, a farm several hundred feet above the lake, and directly behind the town, is, I believe, considered the largest in the range, containing above 14,000 square feet of solid stone in the portion above the surface of the soil.

Two several roads leave the western gate of Neuchâtel. The lower keeps near the surface of the lake, and at the base of the mountains, and passes through the principal villages on the NW. shore to the town of Yverdun, at the further extremity. The upper runs higher and higher up the country, branching off to the superior valleys of the Jura, on the one hand, and on the other through the Val de Travers into Franche Comté.

The road first mentioned passes many points of interest; none more so than the hallowed field and gray turreted keep of the castle of Grandson; but the other being far less known, and at the same time more romantic, I prefer occupying a few pages with a description of its principal features.

In the view to the SW. of Neuchâtel, the object which immediately arrests the attention as the most striking and unusual feature, is the vast break in the outline of the Jura, between the mountains of

Boudry and La Tourne, forming the entrance into the Val de Travers. From the long low headland which stretches far into the lake below Boudry, the country is seen to sweep upwards for many miles to the base of these two mountains, each of which is near 2,800 feet above the lake. The road from Neuchâtel passes through the villages of Peseux and Corscelles, and afterwards ascends through the forests over the undulating surface of the country to the village of Rochefort at the foot of La Tourne. From this point it cuts across a large rocky buttress resting against the southern angle of the mountain, and, turning the corner, approaches the brink of the hollow. The traveller here finds himself on a ledge half-way up the steep, overlooking a defile of great breadth and depth, at the bottom of which the river Areuse flows, in a deep, narrow, and tortuous channel, towards the low country. The opposite mountain of Boudry presents to the defile a long line of rocky heights, bare and rugged towards the top, but feathered lower down with pine forests.

On the wooded summit of the rocky projection just mentioned, as attached to the angle of La Tourne*, stood in olden time the castle of the Barons of Rochefort, commanding this important passage into France. Their fame, as far as I can learn, was but indifferently acquired and maintained, by the continual robberies of the passengers, and the imposts levied upon the richer or less powerful subjects traversing the mountains; till their constant depredations brought down upon them the vengeance of the neighbouring nobles, who took and demolished

* La Tourne, 4,250 feet above the sea.

their castle. Its situation was worthy of a castle of the olden times of chivalry and romance. Over the slopes of this hill, and through the entrance of the deeper parts of the defile, appear a portion of the lower country, the lake, and the chain of Alps on the horizon.

Up the gorge, the view is bounded at several miles distance by a turn of the valley to the right beyond the hamlet of Brod*, and the eye rests upon the Creux du Vent†, and its vast crater, rising above the forests. The whole line of route from this point to Brod, about three miles distant, affords a series of views in which the objects just enumerated appear by turns more or less prominent, according to the change of place, or the position of the traveller, alternately ascending the ridges on the side of the mountain, or dipping into the woody hollows between them. Near the hamlet, the road attains its highest point of elevation, of about 1,400 feet above the lake; and from thence descends the steep side of the Clusette, into the Val de Travers.

The Creux du Vent, exactly opposite which Brod is situated, is too remarkable a feature in a sketch of this portion of the Jura, to be passed over with the mere notice of its name and situation. The broad and spacious head of the mountain rising 3,400 feet above the lake appears hollowed out into a vast and profound cavity upwards of 500 feet in depth, surrounded by an amphitheatre of limestone rock from the top to the bottom, though the lower extremities are hidden by the fall of rubbish which forms a slope up about one-third of the height. This vast opening

* The hamlet of Brod, 2,810 feet above the sea.

† Creux du Vent, 4,800 ft.

fronts the defile of which we have been speaking. The diameter of the semicircular amphitheatre is, according to M. de Luc, near three-fourths of a league.

I have seen the Creux du Vent from Brod at many different times, and frequently when exhibiting the singular meteorological phenomenon for which it is peculiar. At times, when a change of weather is impending, the crater of the mountain is often seen to become suddenly filled with a cloud of white vapour, working, and rising, and falling, with an easy but perceptible motion, till the whole hollow presents the appearance of an immense cauldron of boiling vapour, which seldom rises above the edge. If any escape, it is by the opening towards the defile; and from this it may be observed to issue in a thin white line, and float gently upon the atmosphere down the centre of the valley for several miles till imperceptibly diminished and dissipated. This phenomenon never lasts longer than between one and two hours, when the vapour in the mountain disperses, and leaves the cavity perfectly clear. The brow of its impending precipice would be a fitting situation for a temple to the winds; for, with one single exception, I never was in this part of the defile without being caught in a tornado proceeding from the mountain. The botanical riches of this spot are greater than that of any other mountain in the Jura.

The Val de Travers, through which the Areuse passes in the earlier part of its course, is a spacious valley, containing many villages and hamlets. St. Sulpice, the highest of these, lies in a hollow, for the greater part shut in by high mountains, the most westerly of which, La Tour, is traversed by the high road to France, passing through a narrow aperture

in the rocks, only admitting the passage of a single vehicle. To this aperture, which is elevated 1,200 feet above the village of St. Sulpice, considerable interest is attached both by the lover of historical record, and the lover of the marvellous.

In the very narrowest part of the cleft, the ponderous links of a massive iron chain, covered with the rust of several centuries, are seen riveted to the rock. The popular rumour states that this chain was placed across the pass to prevent the passage of artillery and stores, during the preparations made in the winter of 1476, to withstand the threatened attack of Charles the Bold. This may be the case; for, though it is known that Charles himself, with the greater part of his army, made his irruption into the country in the line of Besançon and Orbe, in the spring of this year, yet it is hardly to be supposed that he would not attempt to secure this important pass into Burgundy; the more so, as, in the preceding year, a body of the confederated Swiss had pushed across the Jura in this direction, taken the town, and burnt the castle of Pontarlier, and, after defeating a body of Burgundians sent against them, retired over the mountains again in perfect security. Some are inclined to consider it, however, as a relic of yet greater antiquity. This frontier has often been attacked and defended in subsequent wars, and even in our own times, though the assistance of the chain has been dispensed with.

The beauty and comforts of the summer evenings in hot weather (in Neuchâtel and its neighbourhood) are very seriously diminished by the presence of the strong and chill evening-breeze, called the *Joran*.

This almost invariably sets in after a warm sunny day, a little before sunset, and blows more or less briskly for an hour, or an hour and a half, before it completely subsides. It comes in strong gusts from the Jura, and prevails through the country at its foot, and over a certain portion of the lake, which rises in small dark ripples as far as its influence is felt. Beyond that, the water retains its smooth glassy appearance. The Joran is caused by the air on the mountains cooling more suddenly than that on the lake, and descending in consequence of its superior density. It is considered a great enemy to the teeth, and is so decidedly to evening-parties on the lake. Its violence in such streets of the town as lie parallel with its course is at times very great.

The heats of summer set in very early this year, and before the end of May we had many a magnificent display of thunder-storms in one or another part of the vast extent of country before us. Neuchâtel itself is rarely exposed to the principal force of the storms, as it is only when they rise and advance from the eastward, that they last any time, or devastate the country at the foot of the Jura; and this is very seldom the case. The far greater number come from the westward, and of these I had many opportunities of observing the invariable line of progress. After following the Jura for some leagues above Yverdon, the main body of the storm swung off across the centre of the lake, and, passing opposite us, hung over the low marshy tracts about Anet and Aarberg. Here they seldom failed to do extensive damage, and the lightning became particularly destructive. The rest of the storm passed

at the same time more to the north, and dissipated itself in the higher parts of the Jura.

One of the thunder-storms arising in this quarter is noted on my memory as peculiarly magnificent. It occurred a few evenings previous to the day of my departure from Neuchâtel to the Oberland, for my second summer's excursions in the Alps.

The day had been cloudless from sunrise to sunset, and the lake perfectly serene, without a ripple on its surface; when, about eight o'clock in the evening, in the absence of every breath of wind, I observed the water begin gradually to heave itself into that peculiar state of agitation known here by the name of the *gonfle*, or ground-swell, often observed in this and the neighbouring lakes, before a sudden change of weather. The last pale glow of the west, upon this agitated yet unbroken surface, had a more beautiful effect than I can describe. A bank of clouds was then seen slowly rising above the western horizon, and before nine o'clock not only were momentary flashes gleaming in this point, but, as the sky darkened, bright lines of reflected light streamed behind the distant Alps on the S. and SE. The twilight faded away, to give yet more splendid and striking effect to the blaze of lightning which constantly flickered from one or other point of the wide circle around us. An hour may have elapsed from the time that these clouds put themselves in motion before they reached our part of the country; and I have rarely seen a more splendid sight than that which presented itself during the greater portion of this time. The attention was principally drawn towards the head of the

lake, from which quarter, it was evident, our portion of the tempest would approach. The mass of clouds in that direction came sweeping majestically onward, preceded by a few ragged and fantastic portions of black vapour, the form of which, as well as the gradual progress of the whole body over the mountains and lake, might be momentarily observed by the brilliant light that every instant illuminated the country. At the same time the whole landscape, from the Jura to the Friburg mountains, was visible; and the lake which now began to ripple to the shore in short broken waves, was indeed a glorious spectacle.

The storm had apparently begun to advance over the further extremity of the lake, before the ear caught the first distant roll of the thunder: it was not till about the same time that our atmosphere began to be gusty and agitated. If I may single out any definite portion of this thunder-storm for a few additional lines of description, I think it should be about the time, when, having advanced up the lake to the Montagne de Boudry, it began, apparently, to feel the influence of a current of air from the vast defile of the Areuse; and to turn the greater part of its force across the water, towards the shores of Friburg and Berne. I should suppose that the stratum of clouds, which seemed to be the principal seat of the electric matter, was elevated at this time more than 1,700 feet above the lake, judging from the height of that portion of the mountain that was cut by it. By the continual glare of the flashes of lightning, which seemed here to put forth all their splendour, in the fore-ground might be seen the pier, and the bridge leading to it, covered with groups of people,

whose figures were momentarily brought into harsh relief, against the glowing but broken surface of the lake before them; the farther shore, and nearer mountains, and even the very recesses of the great defile, all distinct and bright; and, in the sky, the ragged and disjointed masses of the thunder-clouds eddying to and fro, and gradually drawing towards the centre of the lake; while the thunder rolled and re-echoed among the mountains, till it became difficult to distinguish which was the explosion, and which the echo. Another ten minutes, and the skirt of the storm enveloped us in its train of heavy rain; and the beauty of the tempest was passed.

But this chapter of recollections is at an end.—As in the foregoing year, the middle of June (1826) found me shaking off my scruples, my winter habits and occupations, my comparatively sedentary existence, and, I may add, many enjoyments;—accoutred once more with my knapsack and pole, and with my face turned towards the Alps.

CHAPTER VII.

“ The morn is up again ! the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,
And glowing into day. We may resume
The march of our existence:—and thus I
* * * * * may find room,
And food for meditation—nor pass by
Much that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.”

I CANNOT deny, that, in quitting my winter's residence, I felt I was doing some violence to the quiet and social part of my nature ; for the ties which bound me to it had become stronger, and there was that uncertainty hanging over the future which tended to nurture uneasy feeling, and to invite regret, as I turned my face away from all I had now been for so many months accustomed to. The first sensation which pervaded my mind, as I issued from the hospitable gateway at Montmirail, early on the morning of the 18th of June, and found myself in full health and activity, shaking off a winter's rust, and rapidly advancing along the high road over the Pont de Thiele, with a rising sun and brisk morning air full in my face, was that of true light-hearted boyish exultation, that exultation which the Arab is described as experiencing, when in motion on the surface of the vast unbounded desert, and resulting from much the same excitement

of animal feeling. Then, as I mounted the gentle hills towards Anet, I could not forbear pausing, and casting many a lingering look down upon the country I was quitting.

There lay our unruffled and wide-spread lake, and its little town and villages sleeping in the morning haze; not a crag, not a break, not a cottage on the steep flanks of the mountain-barrier behind, which did not awaken some sweet recollection; and, as I looked, regret began to steal over my mind. Till then I hardly knew how much I loved some of those, upon whose certain and unvarying kindness I was then turning my back, for a wandering and unsettled life.

At the town of Berne, whither a morning's walk brought me, I was soon joined by my friend from the Simmenthal, and, after a few days' interval, left it in his company for the parsonage at Erlenbach, which was to be my head-quarters this summer also.

Belp, a large village about two leagues from the city, on the west bank of the Aar, was our halting-place during the greater part of the day. It is situated at the foot of a singularly formed mountain, rising up in the middle of that tongue of low country which extends from the neighbourhood of Berne towards the lake of Thun. The prevailing formation is here the *molasse*, or red sandstone, intermixed with fossil shells and stalactitical tufa. As we proceeded, in the course of the afternoon, the most enchanting views, towards the Jura and the country around Berne on one side, the valley of the Aar in our vicinity, and above all the country beyond Thun, the lake, and mass of mountains in the distance, began to display themselves at each opening in the forest.

The Aar, in this part of its course, is surrounded by low grounds, over which it seems formerly to have spread itself in floods, and rendered perfectly sterile, particularly to the NW. of Münsingen.

In all probability the greater part of these low lands, comprising many thousand acres, may now be recovered by the government, which has spared no pains or expense in the construction of dikes, &c. to confine the river within ordinary bounds. But the great work, and one which reflects much credit upon the projector, and which conduces more than any thing to this end, is the new bed cut for the conjoined torrents of the Simmen and Kander. These, after their junction in the broken land between the mountains and the lake of Thun, formerly pursued a course wide of the lower end of the lake, and fell into the Aar many miles below the town of Thun; often in unsettled weather joining their waters to those of the Aar, and overspreading the country with an overwhelming deluge.

This, however, has been effectually checked by the execution of the bold project of cutting through one of the above mentioned ridges, near the castle of Strätlingen, at a point where the course of the rivers ran at no great distance from the SW. corner of the lake, thereby turning off their waters into that capacious basin, and abridging their course by several leagues.

Though the day had been the clearest, warmest and finest seen for some weeks, the glaciers had been enveloped, during the morning and afternoon, by high white masses of clouds. These cleared off as evening advanced; and after we had reached and passed Thun, by a zig-zag route across the country

from the little village and lake of Gerzensee, the Jungfrau, Eigers, and Schreckhorn rose in clear and bright sunshine from the darkening mass of enormous mountains which appeared to form their pedestal.

Of all the secondary mountains, the Niesen, to whose base we were approaching, stood forth as the most noble and imposing.

To the right the Stockhorn began to emerge from a long line of vapours in which it had been shrouded ever since the morning, and every quarter of a mile produced some change in the form of the summit. No one who saw this singular rock, from the mound of the castle of Strätlingen alone, over which our pathway led us, would believe its ascent practicable.

We soon reached Brodhaus, at the foot of the Simmenfluh, and entered the pass of the Simmenthal.

I cannot paint the complicated emotions of awe, wonder, and admiration with which I have always approached the base of these stupendous mountains. The sun had long been set when we entered the defile between the Bär and the Günzenen. The glaciers still rose cold and white in the grey and darkening atmosphere. The stars were twinkling over them; and while the summits of the Niesen and nearer mountains were still well defined with their rocks and forests in the twilight yet lingering about them, their bases and the profound valleys and defiles at their feet were enveloped in the deepest shade. We kept on our way among the rocks and thickets of the pass, and up the valley, and arrived at our home soon after nightfall.

The interval of my absence had brought no very unforeseen change either in the spot or its inhabitants. Poor Coquet, to be sure, had been gathered to her fathers; but there was Stumah, a great half-grown ungainly puppy, ready to do the honours in her stead.

During the first days after my return to this retired valley, I watched from day to day the gradual diminution of the patches of snow, which some previous rough weather had sprinkled among the forests, pastures, and rocks of the higher parts of the mountains surrounding us. These diminished in number and extent with a rapidity which left no room for repining; and the end of the month and commencement of July were distinguished by weather of a heat and sultriness which was almost unlooked for in this elevated part of the country. For many successive days, the early morning was so glaring and so oppressively hot, that, to sit reading in the darkest corner to be found was all that could be done. The afternoons were divided between burning sun-gleams and thunder-storms, and the evenings distinguished by a thousand beautiful and exquisite plays of light and shade, as the ragged and broken portions of the spent thunder-clouds invariably rose from the mountains, melted into the sky, and gave free access to the ruddy and cheerful beams of the setting sun.

From an early dawn till about ten in the morning the air remained as clear as it was possible to conceive, with the exception of a fine and deliciously blue haze, enveloping the rocks on the summits of the mountains. Soon after this hour, however, two or three small clouds, of a dazzling whiteness,

scarcely, when first descried, larger than specks, might be seen floating high in the atmosphere. The number of these gradually increased, and little by little, the centre of each assuming a darker hue, they began to put themselves in motion, and to collect upon the mountain-tops. About eleven they formed high masses of fleecy clouds, apparently out of the range of the Bize, which was at this season the prevailing wind. At noon the air grew more sultry; the lower parts of these clouds began to form one dusky stratum over another, descending slowly lower and lower down the mountains: and almost invariably between one and two o'clock, the first bursts of thunder came rolling on the wind, from one or another quarter. One thunder-storm generally began its operations at the back of the Günzenen to the NE. and a second apparently beyond the Thurnen to the SSW. probably in the mountains of the Ober Simmenthal. These, and others rising in different quarters continued to spread among the mountains with various effect, but without approaching our immediate neighbourhood, till between four and five in the afternoon, when the tail of one never failed to come sweeping down our valley towards the lake of Thun. This produced a little rain till about an hour before sunset, when the clouds, rapidly breaking up and dispersing, left by nine o'clock no vestiges, upon the clear and star-light sky, of the various changes it had undergone during the preceding twelve hours. This was the almost invariable routine for ten successive days.

I arrived in the valley a few days too late for a bear hunt, a large male bear having shortly before been interrupted in his journeyings through the

mountains, and killed on the alp opposite our village, into which his carcase was afterwards conveyed in triumph, and his flesh eat as venison. His skin was stuffed according to custom, and carried about in procession to the neighbouring villages. As the reward offered by government for the death of a bear is fifty crowns, besides the possession of the animal, and the gleanings consequent upon its postmortuary travels through the country, violent quarrels almost always ensue among the hunters, as it can rarely be decided by what shot he was dispatched. And this did not fail to be the case on the present occasion.

Though I make no doubt I should have attended the hunt with much pleasure, had I been in the country, yet as I was not, I was the more tempted to moralize upon the neglect of the rights of hospitality experienced by a brother wanderer, though indeed of a different race. He had done no harm, and probably never meant to do any; and it was rather hard that the first impulse of his observers should be to take away his life.

It might have been supposed that the continual and daily thunder-storms which seemed to sail over every portion of the surrounding mountains in turn, and which, as the discoloured and foaming streams of the Simmen told us had elsewhere been accompanied with much rain, would have had some effect upon the air, and rendered it more cool and refreshing. But this was not the case; for another week, both night and morning were as sultry and enervating in their degree as the burning atmosphere of noon-day.

About the beginning of July, however, the nights

began to be more refreshing ; and yet, though our starlight heaven remained serene, the bright and brilliant lightning, which shot up from the points and outlines of the mountains encircling our long valley, and by its solemn beauty kept us in the open air sometimes till a very late hour, gave us to understand that other parts of the Alps were the theatre of nightly storm.

It was after a night distinguished by a mute but magnificent exhibition of this description, that I started at early dawn to visit Thun for the day. It was market-day ; and, as I approached the town, I had to run the gauntlet between two compressed rows of peasant-cars repairing to it. The staple commodity was, to all appearance, cheese, and a rare cargo there was of it. The second bridge over the Aar became, in consequence of the display of cheapening, and tasting, and handling, one of the most suffocating presses I ever attempted to make my way through, or could have imagined. I question if Edinburgh, or Paris, or even Lisbon could have matched it. This purgatory was, however, soon exchanged for a seat in the pure air of the church-yard. The view from this point must rank among the most exquisite of the Alps.

The town, immediately below you, with its gateways, busy streets, bridges, and clean lines of red tiling ; the blue Aar and its islands ; the wide transparent lake beyond the bold shore to the eastward ; the fine wide expanse of wooded country, spotted with farms, villages, and country seats, stretching on the right up to the very base of the long, craggy and precipitous chain of the Stockhorn ; in the background the wide and deep mountain horizon, with

the magnificent pyramidal Niesen standing majestically forward at the termination of the chain of the Männlifuh; the entrances into the valleys of the Kander and Simmen dimly descried in the mass; and, above all, the white and glowing glaciers rising pure and cloudless into the blue atmosphere:—surely these are the features of a noble landscape. As evening drew near, and the sultriness began to abate, I resumed my route to the Simmenthal.

The country in the immediate vicinity of Thun has been often said to resemble many parts of England, and I think not without propriety.

I was much amused, as I trudged along, in noting the peculiar traits of that picture of rural enjoyment which presents itself in this sweet country, during the hours of refreshment and listless ease succeeding the fatigues and labours of a cloudless summer's day; when the sun is setting, the air is cool, nature is sinking to repose, and man and beast are forgetting their labour in enviable rest after exertion. When the sun had sunk behind the Jura, though his departing beams still lingered for a while upon the Eigers and Blümlis-alp, the inferior mountains, with their bare and rocky summits, only reflected the glow of the reddened west, and the plains and valleys were already in dim twilight. The road was now cleared of the market-people, with the exception of a poor woman on one part of it, toiling at the tails of two young giddy and self-willed porkers, who never agreed together except in going the wrong road. The cows were coming out in groups from the enclosure where they had been milked, on to some of the common pasture land, which is here covered with a fine short turf like a

lawn, and sprinkled with well-grown oaks of a remarkably deep green foliage. Here and there was a youngster conducting a solitary cow across the bye roads to a distant farm-house, or a girl driving her goats gently forward with an osier goad, her pet kid at one moment close at her heels, and then lagging a little in the rear, and taking liberties like all pets and favorites.

As I passed the farms or hamlets, I found the inhabitants almost invariably seated before their doors under the great spreading roof, or in the little gallery that projects from the first story; and ready to salute the passenger with *Gute nacht geb' euch Gott* (God grant you a good night), or, *Schlafet wohl* (sleep well), and a slight pull at the bluish-grey night-cap, which is the general head-dress of the peasant, day and night. From time to time, from among the cottages, or from some footway along the meadows or forest sides, a solitary individual might be heard singing his *Schweitzerlied*; or calling forth the echoes in that peculiar species of vocal melody described elsewhere. However rude, it is a species of music delightfully appropriate to the country that has given it birth, and the scenes among which it is exercised. I have never heard it, either from afar in the still evening, falling on the ear in short interrupted catches, or upon the high alpine pastures, mingling with the sound of the cattle-bells and the dash of the mountain torrent, without a peculiar sensation of pleasure.

As I left the open country at the foot of the Niesen, the twilight was fast departing; the stars were brightening every instant, and the glaciers quickly fading into a gray sky. Between the snowy

ridges of the Blümlis-alp, lay a deep blue or lead-coloured mass of thunder clouds, half hid among the ridges, but looking very grim and threatening, their high fleecy extremities peering over the deep layers of vapour. At the extremity of the defile I was suddenly caught and cooled in a violent tempest of wind. I fought my way onward, in a very short time got beyond its range, and, continuing my route, reached Erlenbach shortly after.

A few days after, my friend and myself set off at early morning for a day's scramble of considerable length over the mountains to the NW. to the baths of Gurnigel. The baths of Weissenburg, elsewhere described, were the first point to which we directed our steps, with the intention of passing the singular precipice in the depth of that ravine by means of the ladders, and so on to the mountains. I cannot say I had contemplated this part of our line of march with any peculiar feelings of satisfaction; and yet I did not feel inclined, by fighting shy, or turning suddenly prudent or cowardly, whichever it might be termed, to be the cause of much additional labour to my companion as well as to myself, by the circuitous route it would be necessary to make if we wished to avoid the perilous short cut. So I kept my uneasy feelings to myself—held my breath and strode away.

The Baths were passed; and we advanced along the side of the torrent upon a foot-path, whose slippery angles, sharp turns, and shelving surface over the boiling torrent, give a very suitable foretaste of what is to follow. The trunk of the pine laid across the mountain stream at the foot of the pre-

cipice was crossed, and we began the ascent. The lower part is surmounted by a narrow winding footway, running along the ledges, and carrying the adventurer insensibly up a considerable height, till it terminates at the foot of a perpendicular mass of rock. Part of this is next to be scaled by means of a ladder between thirty and forty feet high, and the rest upon a rude and uneven set of steps, formed of stones forced into the angle of a nearly perpendicular fissure, down which a small stream is constantly trickling. This is by far the most disagreeable part of the ascent, as you can depend very little upon your hands for support, and a false step would be almost certain destruction. After this rock is surmounted, the ascent is continued by the same zig-zag pathway as that at the commencement, but which now would appear commodious enough, after the passage of the intermediate portion of the escalade. This leads to the summit, which may be about five hundred feet above the Baths. Here we arrived breathless, but in safety.

We continued our climb up the mountains for some time without further interruption than an occasional pause, rendered expedient by the steepness of the ascent; and the heat of the day becoming extremely oppressive, we were very glad to reach a small *châlet* on this part of the mountain, called the Haggen.

The middle pastures of the Alps are the region of orchidæ and butterflies, both of which are to be found there in great beauty and variety.

The *châlet*, which we had entered to get some shelter from the sun and directions as to our further route, was of the very meanest order. Poor and

filthy within and without; half-a-dozen goats and a couple of cows being the whole stock of the occupier. After a brief stay, we made good our passage of the ridge before us, and gained the deep hollow on the other side, by an equally rapid and even more fatiguing descent.

He who scrambles much in these mountains will soon find, to his cost, that the unpractised eye is no measurer of distances. Of this truth, I have made experience a hundred times, to the extinction of many a bright spark of hope. Nor is this to be wondered at, in a country where all natural objects are upon so gigantic a scale, and where the number of those whose dimensions are familiar to you is but small; not to speak of the optical deceptions so common in mountainous districts.

When you are informed that a given summit, or part of the track before you, is full five leagues off, incredulity may be forgiven, when, apparently, it is not half that distance. But set off: cross this valley—twenty minutes, you imagine, will suffice; in twenty minutes you are only on the plank spanning the stream, which, from your first position, had seemed but a drain. You take courage, and start afresh to reach the *châlet* at the extremity of the little plain forming the head of the valley,—say a quarter of an hour's distance; in a quarter of an hour, you have better than a quarter of an hour's walk before you. What you conceived to be a single *châlet*, proves to be a cluster; the small stones in their immediate vicinity become cattle; or what you judged to be cattle, massive fragments of rock. As you advance, one portion of the mountain after another seems to detach itself, and becomes an inde-

pendent ridge, between which and the next you have a valley to traverse: and so on to the very summit, concerning which you may have inquired if there was room to stand, and which you eventually discover to be a broad stratum of rock, where a hundred men might repose themselves.

From the hollow into which we now descended, we had an unobstructed view of the long valley of the Wahl-alp, descending from the Stockhorn. From hence this mountain is perhaps seen to the greatest advantage, entirely detached and independent of the long line of rocks and mountains with which it is confounded, and of which it only seems to be an elevated point, when seen from the neighbourhood of Thun.

We now directed our steps towards the Gantrish and Neunenen, two lofty summits of the Stockhorn-chain, considerably to the westward, and after some time reached a *châlet* upon the inferior alp, which we entered to take some refreshment, and seek shelter from the heat which had hitherto been excessive.

The thunder-storms, of which, as already mentioned, we had had our share, during the past week, seem not to have been idle here; and, no later than the preceding evening, the lightning had fallen upon a huge *tanne*, or silver fir, on the ridge opposite the *châlet*, and torn it to the ground, accompanied by a peal of thunder that frightened both cows, goats, and cowherds almost out of their wits.

This *vacherie* was of the first class, the cowherd being possessed of between eighty and ninety cows, besides sheep, swine, and goats. All these cows have to be milked morning and evening, and every day a great cheese, of 120 pounds weight, is made from the

milk, besides butter, &c. The great copper cauldron in which the cheese is made weighed at least 220 pounds, and would even

‘ Have grac’d a dance of witches.’

In some vacheries on these mountains things are on a still larger scale. These cheeses are exported for the most part to Russia.

Wenig mühe und viel profit—(little trouble and much profit) is the saying among these peasants. In the spring, as soon as the snow has disappeared, and the young grass sprouts up, the cattle are sent from the villages up to the first and lower pastures. Should a certain portion of these be exhausted, they change their quarters to another part of the mountain. Here they stay till about the 10th or 12th of June, when the cattle are driven to the middle ranges of pastures. That portion of the herds intended for a summer campaign on the highest alps, remain here till the beginning of July, and, on the 4th of that month, generally ascend to them; return to the middle range of pastures about seven or eight weeks afterwards, spend there about fourteen days, or three weeks, to eat the aftergrass; and finally return into the valleys about the 10th or 11th of October; where they remain in the vicinity of the villages, till driven by the snow and tempests of winter into the stables.

That portion of the cattle, on the other hand, which is not destined to pass the summer on the higher alps, and are necessary for the supply of the village with milk and butter, descend from the middle pastures on the 4th of July, into the valley, and consume the grass upon the pasturage belonging to the commune, till the winter drives them under shelter.

The very highest alpine pasturages are never occupied more than three or four weeks at the farthest.

It is surprising to me that the vachers, accustomed as they are to study cleanliness in all the utensils employed in the fabrication of their cheeses, should not extend their care a little to the domestic arrangements in their summer habitations, which are for the most part disgustingly filthy, the sleeping apartment in particular. But it seems they are only cleanly, where it is imperatively necessary.

From this *châlet* we continued our ascent, and in the last and highest valley below the ridge between the Neunenen and Gantrisch were brought to a halt by a sudden and violent thunder-storm, which driving up the opposite side of these mountains, passed over it precisely where *we* had intended to do so, and threw into the hollow a torrent of wind and hail. Our refuge was now a solitary *châlet*, of which we had not long been in possession when the real owners, about twenty goats, came rushing in at the door-way at a hand gallop. In this goodly company we remained for nearly an hour, regaled by several fine echoing peals of thunder, but waiting the cessation of the storm with some impatience, as my companion began to feel himself very unwell, and the state of inactivity seemed to add to his indisposition. This will not be wondered at, when I remind the reader that, from a degree of heat almost insupportable, we were now suddenly enveloped in an atmosphere of such icy coldness as caused us to shiver from head to foot. As soon as the air cleared, therefore, we climbed leisurely to the ridge, having on each side of us a towering and precipitous mass of bare rock, soaring to nearly two thousand

feet above the *crête* between them. The summit of the Gantrisch is inaccessible. The ridge between the two is very rich in the rarer alpine plants.

During the succeeding hour and a half, occupied in descending from the ridge, and following the chain of inferior hills to the north west, nothing occurred worthy of note. The hill sides were in many places covered with the most astonishing profusion of the *rhododendron*. Fine openings towards the lake and country of Thun, to the northward, and of the country towards the Jura on the left, were afforded us from time to time; and the prospect from the summit of the Gurnigel, the last of the range, is particularly fine, as it commands an unobstructed view on every side. Half an hour's rapid descent from hence brings the traveller to the baths where we proposed remaining for the ensuing night.

Gurnigel-Bad is situated among the inferior mountains of the Stockhorn-chain, to the SSW. of Berne, about 3,600 feet above the level of the sea surrounded on every side more or less by pine forests, yet commanding, from its peculiar situation on the rapid slope of the mountain, an uncommonly wide extended and varied view. The mineral waters rise principally in two distinct sources, the *Schwartzbrunlein* and the *Stockbrun*. Their quality is very different; the former is a very strong and sulphuric spring, of extremely disagreeable smell and flavour, and is only taken internally. The second is made use of externally as well as internally. Both are quite cold, and I believe principally prescribed for complaints of the stomach. These baths are well frequented during the months of July, August, and September, chiefly from

the vicinity of Berne, Friburg, and the surrounding mountains. They seem to be arranged and conducted in a much more orderly and convenient manner than most of the bathing-places in this country.

A gallon of the execrable water from the Black-fountain is prescribed to be taken every morning, by those wishing to *faire la cure*. A light breakfast of *soupe au riz* follows after some hours' fast; and the same potation, fast, and slight meal is the prescribed order of each evening. What appears a singular manner of proceeding is, that, at dinner, the embargo is removed, and each of the patients is allowed to indulge his appetite without the least reserve, eating and drinking what and as much as he will.

Every evening there is a rustic ball, in which all classes intermix, without ceremony. Great numbers of peasants repair hither from the vicinity, to undergo the penance just described, and appear to be devoured by ennui; sitting in discontented postures on the benches, twisting straws, rubbing the calves of the legs, or cutting sticks into pieces; in short, shewing, by every movement, that gentlemanly idleness was not properly intended for them.

There are about thirty bathing rooms of the first class, containing two or three baths each. These are only wooden troughs, just so large that you can lie down in them upon a pinch, wrapped up in a bathing-gown. In one of these you may lie in state, from half an hour to an hour and a half, *ad libitum*, letting in more warm-water when you find yourself growing chill; but I was quite satisfied with ten or twelve minutes' trial, as I found it was, besides

the inconvenience arising from the confined condition, neither one thing nor another, neither hot nor cold.

Some pleasant walks are cut in the neighbouring woods; though neither the tanne, the larch, the fir, nor the pine are the best trees imaginable for the formation of shrubberies or arbours.

It is difficult to give a description of the fine view from the terrace before the line of buildings belonging to the baths.

Eastward, the country between Berne and Thun presents itself; and beyond that the neighbourhood of the Emmenthal, and on the horizon a deep line of mountains, among which the Pilatus near Lucern is very distinguishable.

To the west, the Guggisberg district, with the village of that name, and various parts of the Friburg mountains.

The distant N. and NW. horizon is occupied by the range of the Jura from the Dole in the vicinity of Geneva, to the part of the chain beyond Arau, a long and from its distance even low line, hardly perceptibly broken by the Weissenstein, the Chaseral, and the defile into the Val de Travers. At the foot of the Jura, portions of the lakes of Bienne, Morat, and Neuchâtel, are distinguishable. The middle ground appears occupied by a large tract of varied and uneven country, with innumerable villages and forests, up to the foot of the Gurnigel chain. That portion of this fine expanse of country which drew my attention more than any other, was most naturally the district containing my winter's residence. This I discovered, after a long and careful examination, not without a feeling of peculiar plea-

sure, and one of those internal gushes of warm feeling, which tells us who roam the world, that we have not thrown aside the sweetest and most natural affections which link us with society.

The following day, a fine hot summer morning, with long sparkling strings of gossamer floating about in the air, presaged a continuation of the same fine changeable mountain-weather: however, our plan was to return to Erlenbach; and from this we were not diverted, but set off early in the afternoon, and keeping the base of the mountains, instead of traversing them as on the preceding day, we passed by the baths of Blumenstein, (a strong ferruginous spring), the villages of Ober and Nieder-Stocken and Reutigen, and found ourselves at nightfall at the parsonage again.

Sunday, July 9th.—I think it must be difficult for an Englishman wandering on the continent (supposing him so occupied by distracting novelty, and so little given to make odious comparisons, that six days of the week can pass without his thoughts and reflection being hurried away across the Channel), to pass a *Sunday* there without being impelled to look back to the land of his fathers with more than common interest and affection.

Let it be understood that I mean the real Englishman, the man of heart and of reflection, not the scarecrow, the dandy, the Frenchified milor, he who quits his country to travel because it is the custom, or to follow in a more relaxed state of society the vices which English morality and decorum will not see without rebuke. But the Englishman, whose heart is his country's; who, while he travels to see

with his own eyes, and, while quitting his prejudices, and learning by intercourse with other nations to respect them more, feels his love for his native land, his respect for its laws, constitution, manners, and form of religion doubled; and who would scorn by his individual conduct to bring disgrace upon his home.

In the character of the Sunday in England, there is something so peculiar, so peaceful, and so reviving—a spirit so different from that of other nations, that for one who, like the writer, has become accustomed to it in early life, it becomes a matter of great difficulty, (I will not say impossibility, for I know the omnipotence of time and circumstance), to wean oneself from it, and to be perfectly reconciled to another system and another order of things.

In preferring the forms and institutions of my own country, I do not mean in any way to make myself the judge or condemner of the customs of other nations. I merely say, that to me the day of rest, of quiet devotion and tranquil enjoyment in England, is far more congenial than the day of festivity of other countries. Here, among the mountains, there is a general simplicity in the quiet and unostentatious devotional exercises of the day, which approaches nearer to our feelings and practice than any thing I have yet seen or observed; and I think that, for the pleasures and hilarity of the peasantry on the Sunday evening, apologies may be found far more consistent and weighty, than those brought forward for the unvarying card and dancing-parties into which the population of the towns is divided upon the evening of the same day.

The church-ritual of this canton is very simple,

and therefore very appropriate. It consists of a confession, a prayer for absolution, and a few collects introduced at the termination of the service, after the sermon. The services for the administration of the sacrament are peculiarly impressive. ■

During the days spent in this tranquil manner in the Simmenthal, I had more than once occasion, in pursuit of one object or another, to make my way up the mountains at the back of our village, towards the Stockhorn. The singular hollow to which the mountaineer is introduced, after passing the first towering and elevated ridge above the valley, and which contains the black and motionless tarn called the Stockensee, never ceases to strike with wonder. I have seen many of these singular and elevated lakes both among the English and Welsh mountains, and in the Alps; but none more peculiar in its position than the one in question. There is no visible outlet for its waters, though there can be no doubt but such exists, and that probably it supplies the first springs of the Wildebach lower down the mountain. A fish of exquisite flavour, resembling in every respect our salmon-trout, is found among its inmates. I have been assured it was formerly destitute of fish, but that the common river-trout being brought hither from the Simmen, the present fish has been the result, though now there is the greatest possible difference in size and colours between it and the parent stock.

The great Tanne is the pride of these mountains. The higher you climb, though you find them perhaps fewer in number, their size seems to increase. The most magnificent trees are frequently to be seen standing in the most inclement and unsheltered

situations; clinging to the side of the bare precipice; shooting strong and vigorous from the craggy summit of the ridge, or fixed and rooted deep among the great rocky fragments which lie at its base, the fruits of a convulsion, all record of which may have faded from the traditions of men.

Upon the mass of bare rock, or on some slight inequality or crevice in the face of the precipice, lights the winged seed, either falling from above in the natural course of things by the ripening and opening of the cone in which it has been concealed, or borne upwards from the forests below by the whirlwind. Here it first becomes a seedling, of the height of but a few inches. Perhaps the severity of the winter season checks the growth for many months; but still the hardy plant continues to send forth fibrous roots, in every direction, and to strengthen its hold on the rock, gradually shooting up higher and higher, till it becomes a strong and vigorous tree. Should the principal shoot be broken off by any casualty, another branch from the inferior part of the tree leaves its lateral direction, and takes the lead, soon overtopping the disabled firstborn. Meanwhile the twisted and gnarled roots intertwine and extend themselves, binding the smaller fragments of stone together, and running along the large bare sheets of rock, to pierce into and cling to the rough edges and small cavities at the other side, forming ledges, whereon the fallen leaves, moss, and dust may rest, and become so many reservoirs for that humidity which is its life. There it stands for years, a towering tree with a thousand branches; shadowing the face of the precipices with its dark foliage; bearing the weight of the winter's snow upon its arms, and swaying to and fro unscathed in the

rocking tempest; till it becomes in the eye of the peasant as a part of the mountain, with whose everlasting and living rock it has mingled its substance.

But 'time rolls its ceaseless course!'—The giant tree may still cling to the rock, bleached, tall, and thunder-stricken; the foliage, the bark, and the branches have long strewed the gale. The roots decay; its hold becomes weaker and weaker; it hangs quivering in the mountain blast that whistles through its cloven top; till some morning sees it hurled from its elevated situation, and shattered upon the rocks beneath. Moss and alpine plants soon crawl over the trunk, which in a couple of years is reduced by the constant moisture to powder; and ere long there is no distinguishing even this wreck from the black and scanty mould that surrounds it.

The time was now approaching when, according to my plans, I ought to put myself in motion. I believe it was just about the time I was making some preparation for my departure, that a report came up the valley to our quiet parsonage, of no less romantic a nature than that a *dragon* had been at last seen in the neighbourhood. It was to be sure admitted that it was not quite as formidable as the animal so yclept which the good knight Dieu Donné de Gozon slew in the Island of Rhodes in olden time, nor even as the huge snake of St. Sulpice, recorded in the annals of the Jura. It was said to be the size of a common snake, with, however, the indispensable addition of four legs and a pair of wings.

I do not care for being laughed at, and therefore, though I did not instantly harness myself and go forth to entrap or to slay this said dragon, I avow I did attempt, by all the means in my power, except that of going ten or twelve leagues to Brienz, to trace

the report to its foundation, but without any great success. It was, to be sure, pertinaciously insisted, that a certain pastor had seen something extraordinary in the forest, hanging upon a tree by the tail, either dead or asleep, but which of the two he did not feel inclined to inquire; but that was all of a credible nature that transpired. True it is, however, that every now and then the peasants do come forward with such tales, to the no small perplexity of the curious and credulous in Berne. I believe a small reward has been offered by a gentleman at the college, to him who shall produce an animal in confirmation of this story, but hitherto without success. The *lindwurm* is yet another and more formidable beast, now and then reported to be seen by the peasants. But he is stated to be a *bonâ fide* serpent, and no quadruped like his little, winged, tail-supported relative.

The amusements of the Swiss peasantry are not very varied, as far as I am acquainted with them; but if there is one more deserving a few lines of description than the rest, that will certainly be the peculiar kind of wrestling match called in German *schwingen*. There are certain occasions when this amusement becomes the more general object of interest and attraction, besides being an occasional pastime among the young herdsmen and villagers in their moments of recreation. These are principally of two kinds: the first, when some land-holder, very frequently an innkeeper, obtains permission of the bailiff to advertise a match to take place on a given day on his premises, and gives a sheep or some other prize of like value as the reward of the contest. This may be, as is well understood, only one mode of fishing with a

golden hook, and turns out to the benefit of the inn-keeper principally. A match of this description is mostly frequented by the inhabitants of the valley, or the immediate neighbourhood, and the competitors are of the same class.

The second kind is upon a much larger scale. These are instituted when distinct communes, or even cantons, challenge competition; as is often the case between the canton of Berne and the Forest Cantons, Oberhasli against Unterwalden, or the Simmenthal against the Oberland. At these the concourse of strangers is very considerable, and the whole conducted with more order and display of national feeling than in other more ordinary cases. The consequence is, that the contests are more obstinate and better contested, and party spirit carried to a much greater extent.

The place chosen for this species of game is generally a piece of green sward surrounded by higher ground, to give greater facilities for the spectator. When the match is deemed of sufficient importance, the area is enclosed, and cleared of all persons except the umpires and the combatants. The umpires, of whom there is always a considerable number, and for whose interference there would seem to be constant necessity, are mostly old men, once, no doubt, famous in their day and generation, associated with any among the younger peasants whose muscular powers or experience has procured him a name and authority sufficiently well established in these matters to command the deferential respect of his neighbours. They always decide, whether the fall given be a good fall and valid, and settle any dispute arising from doubtful circumstances, or imputations of unfair play.



THE WRESTLERS.

Preliminaries adjusted, the first pair of combatants step into the centre of the area, and go through the ceremony of shaking hands, to shew that there is no ill will. If there happen to be several parties upon the list of wrestlers, the minor combatants always take precedence; and the winner is rewarded by a voluntary contribution among the bystanders. These, however, only serve as exhibitions for the encouragement of the young, and as whets to the impatience of the crowd. Then stand forward the rivals, who are chosen, from their known superiority to their brethren, to contest the honour of their canton or commune, in the production of the best wrestler. Both dress in a pair of short drawers, capable of being rolled up high on the thigh, and serving as a hold for the left hand of the adversary, while the other hand is placed upon the waistband of the left hip. The art consists in bringing the adversary into an awkward or unwary position, so as to take him at disadvantage, and raising him by main force off his feet to the height of the shoulder, throw him fairly and cleverly upon his back, which decides the victory. But this is often no easy matter, and much interest is excited by the series of preparative essays made by the one or the other to bring the competitor into a position offering sufficient temptation to risk a final attempt; I say risk, because, if the attempt should fail, he who has been hitherto the aggressor has often the worst of it. Two tolerably well-matched wrestlers may thus be many minutes engaged in the preliminary movements, before there is the slightest probability of judging what may be the upshot of the contest. The first movement, after adjusting the hold, which is coolly and leisurely done, is generally, that both go down on one knee,

and begin moving round and round in that position, each ready to take advantage of the slightest inadvertency in the other's movement, position, or imagined inferiority in tenacity of gripe, by springing up with the rapidity of lightning on both feet, and in attempting to raise and fling the other by a sudden effort; or, by swinging him round and round in the air, to weaken his hold and footing, when the matter is soon decided.

In case of trivial accidents, or a fall upon the knees or face, the contest is renewed. The victor seldom fails to get drunk afterwards, and the vanquished to sneak home. It is a dangerous but athletic exercise, and patronized by the magistrates as a means of amusing the peasantry. There is yearly a great match between the Oberhasli people and one or another of the neighbouring communes or cantons, at which numbers of the strangers roaming about the mountains are present.

Les quilles, a species of skittles on a very large scale, is a favourite game among the peasantry, and is universal in the west of Switzerland. In the eastern cantons, principally in Appenzel, a very athletic and ancient amusement is still kept up, allied to the game known in some parts of England by the name of hurling. It simply consists in balancing a massive fragment of rock upon the palm of the right hand, bent backwards to the shoulder; and, after swinging the body to and fro for some time, with one foot raised from the ground, sending the fragment with a sudden exertion of muscular strength against a mark or over a certain limit. I am assured that the strength and skill in this exercise shewn by many of that fine race of mountaineers, the Appenzellers, is almost incredible.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ To breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite.”

July 19th.—I set off in the course of the afternoon to follow an unusual track towards the head of the Simmenthal, by avoiding the circumference of the semicircular course of the valley, and taking a direction as nearly coinciding with its diameter as possible. This route in the first instance pursues the valley of Diemtigen to its extremity; and after traversing an elevated ridge, separating it from the little vale of Fermel, follows the line of the latter, till it opens into the Ober-Simmenthal, at the village of Matten. My original purpose had been to commence my excursion with the ascent of the Männliflüh, the highest point in these offsets from the central chain of the Berne alps; but I now felt little inclined to execute it, as the state of the weather was very far from favourable for such an undertaking.

In my progress up the valley of Diemtigen I met with no object sufficiently uncommon to arrest my attention. The increasing dullness, and lowering appearance of the sky, as the evening drew near, made me the less regret my altered plan of opera-

tions; and upon my arrival at Thiermatt, after a few hours' walk, I sat myself quietly down in the auberge of that small village to await the beginning of another day; with the determination to pursue my road straight over the Grimmi, towards the Ober-Simmenthal. This passage lies between Spielgärtenfluh and the Röthihorn, two rocky summits of one of the numerous ridges diverging from the Männliflüh.

July 20th.—I quitted my night's shelter about five o'clock in the morning, and directed my steps towards the head of the valley, about an hour's walk above Thiermatt. To pursue my way over the Grimmi I found no easy matter, being sadly perplexed with the numberless tracks and foot-paths branching off to various alps, many of which seemed to lead towards the object in view. Thrice I had to change my route, in consequence of having made choice of such as I foresaw, after some time, would not serve my purpose; and it was not till after nearly two hours' toil, that I found myself on the summit of a ridge which was in itself neither very high nor difficult of access. The peep from this point into the little fertile vale of Fermel is very pretty; and the walk through it would have been pleasant enough but for the heat, which began to be rather oppressive.

The curiosity of the peasants overpowered all their stock of politeness and diffidence; for, to do them justice, they seemed to have some portion of both. They were engaged with their hay in the meadows through which my footpath passed, and I had to run the gauntlet through at least a dozen of them in succession, most of whom returned my salut-

ation, by the question, '*Und wenn ich frage darf, woher ist der mann?*'—'If a body dare inquire, where does the gentleman come from?' A strange face was apparently a rare occurrence.

The descent of the valley of Fermel to the village of Matten occupied about an hour and a half. Here I fell into the high road up the Simmenthal, and followed it to the highest village, that of Lenk. Some miles before I reached this place, I gained a noble view of the huge mountains and glaciers which shut in the valley. The weather had gradually become perfectly fair, though rather too hot for enjoyment, burdened as I was with my knapsack, the weight of which I never failed to perceive for the first two or three days of my renewed march; though afterwards I not only ceased to feel any inconvenience, but imagined I walked the better and steadier with it.

Directly above the head of the valley rises the Wild-Strubel*; to the west of this the Rätzliberg glacier; then the Mittaghorn, the Gletscherhorn, and the Rorbachstein: between the latter and the Schneeschneide, lies the Rawyl-horn and glacier, overhanging the pass of that name. The first-mentioned mountain, with the waste of snowy glaciers beneath it, forms the most striking and prominent feature, rising into the air above an unusually long line of gray precipices, down which ten or twelve cascades are seen rolling into the country at their base.

The neighbourhood of Lenk appeared to have suffered considerably from inundations from the mountain-torrents during the late thunder-storms.

* The Wild-Strubel, 11,000 feet above the sea.

An hour's halt in the village was all I could allow myself, conformably with the only plan I could fix upon. This was, to go and take up my night's lodging in the châteaux at the foot of the Rawyl, after visiting the source of the Simmen, at the Seven Fountains.

Advancing towards the mountains, the prospect upon the glaciers before me became hourly more enchanting; yet I must candidly confess that I was so overcome with heat, so impatient of my burden, and attacked by such swarms of horse-flies and mosquitoes, that I could do little but trudge doggedly forwards, pant, fan my face, shrug my shoulders, and satisfy my vengeance upon such of the enemy as came within my reach.

After following the Simmen for about an hour, flowing sluggishly in a marshy bottom, I arrived at the foot of a jumble of steep woody hills, down the declivity of which the hand of man has worked a channel for the river in its descent from the mountain. It here forms a deep and foaming rapid, of nearly half a league in length, broken in one or two places by respectable cascades. A number of persecuting vagabonds now fell into my wake, and followed me for a considerable time, insisting upon my employing them as guides, and were almost as difficult to be shaken off as the horse-flies. Nevertheless, a guide would be here a very pardonable luxury, for I had to make as many turns and windings as a hare, before I crossed the little bridge at the top of this passage, and stood upon the pasture at the foot of the line of precipices over which the Rätzli-glacier shews its ragged green masses of ice.

Just before I reached Seven Fountains, I met an

English party, with their halo of guides and provision-bearers, on their return. John Bull marched in the van, with a kind of pet air, as if he thought he had been humbugged, and had not seen enough for his money and extra exertion; no salutation, except that conveyed by a stare, passed between us. Ten paces behind him came my lady's maid, hopping, and slipping, and sliding among the loose fragments, with her under-lip thrust out, and every mark of offended delicacy, as she accepted the assistance of a brawny Swiss guide, to make this or that unusual hop or stride. About ten paces further appeared the rear of the party, in the person of a young lady, probably the daughter of the elderly gentleman. Had I followed the humour in which I happened to be, I should perhaps have passed by the daughter with equal nonchalance with the parent; but when I caught a glance of a clear, bright, speaking, English countenance, beaming with that beautiful expression of vivacity and sense which characterizes my countrywomen, I could not avoid tendering my homage, by moving my cap; and when our backs were turned, after our mute salutation, I can hardly say why or wherefore, but my heart ached with the remembrance of my distant home and country. It seemed to me unnatural, too, that those to whom God had given a common country, language, and perhaps feelings, should thus pass each other, in the wilderness of a foreign land, with indifference.

I think the English gentleman just mentioned, supposing that I have not mistaken his state of feeling, was not to be hastily condemned as unreasonable in being out of humour. The appearance of

the Seven Fountains, will hardly repay a journey of four fatiguing hours to the traveller who undertakes it without any ulterior object, and returns to Der Lenk. However, the mountain scenery may offer good compensation to many. The number of seven is now no longer applicable to the divisions of this cascade, the character of the fall having changed very considerably since the time when the river and valley took their name from the sevenfold form of the source.

As I did not intend to retrace my steps to the hamlet of Oberried, to double the foot of the mountain that separates the head of the Simmenthal from the Iffigenthal at the foot of the Rawyl, I kept forwards under the great precipices towards the intervening ridge. While in this position, I was several times startled by hearing the fall of avalanches on the glaciers above me, and felt a disagreeable qualm, in the contemplation of my exposed situation; for, that they frequently came over the brow of the impending precipice I had positive proof, by the soil on which I was treading, and of course I felt more inclined to argue upon the probability than the improbability of one doing so now. But though I heard the thunder of their fall and its echoes, I saw nothing of them; and, gradually emerging on to more elevated ground, pursued a track leading to the pastures, and in about three hours gained the valley of Iffigen.

After a very hot and fatiguing day's march, I thought it luxury to find one of the chalets in this deep solitude inhabited by a vacher and his family, who agreed to my passing the night upon the hay in one of their remoter out-buildings.

Retiring from the immediate neighbourhood of this little 'cluster of summer habitations higher up the valley, it would be difficult to describe the impression of undisturbed solitude produced upon the mind by the contemplation of the stern and barren features of the scenery by which you are surrounded. The eye wanders over the vale and the surface of the huge barrier of gray precipice, without being diverted by any object indicative of the presence or visits of the living creation.

Perhaps, for one brief portion of the brightest month of summer, the peasant leads a part of his herd from the *châlets* into these deep recesses, thus spreading over the margin of the torrent and the grassy slopes at the foot of the precipice, a brief and partial display of life and its duties; and, by their presence, scaring the chamois and the *lämmergeyer* (the vulture of the Alps), the sole frequenters of these wilds, to still higher and more inaccessible retreats. To those who consider solitude as absence from mankind and the scenes which link man with society—this would be solitude.

Soon after eight o'clock in the evening, I scrambled up into the roof of the log-hut, open on all sides to the air, yet hot as a stove in consequence of the steam arising from the bodies of thirty or forty goats lodged below. Here, wrapped up in my mantle, I attempted to get some rest.

What between the continued chiming of the bells of the cattle, the stirring among the troop beneath me, and a brief but smart thunder-storm, I got but little sleep till towards dawn. At four o'clock I prepared to quit my dormitory, and to resume my journey.

My first business was to hunt about in the hay for certain articles which were missing from my pockets, chiefly such as were of some consequence to the traveller. It was not till after a very considerable time spent in carefully sifting the six or seven cubic feet upon which I had been rolling and tossing, that I was able to recover the most important; some of smaller value, such as pens and pencils, escaped me altogether, and were, no doubt, eaten by the goats in the course of time, with wonder and relish.

After procuring what refreshment I could command in my present situation, which was not the best calculated to fortify me for the fatigues of a passage of nine leagues, I exchanged the morning salutation with the vacher and his household, and set forward.

The Rawyl-pass has been elsewhere stated to be situated between the Gemmi and the Sanetsch, both of which were traversed in the summer of the foregoing year. It is less frequented than either.

As repeated experience had shewn me how vexatiously time and energy may be expended in attempting to find the pathway over the broken and perplexing ground at the foot of the precipices, and as I was aware that I should have full employment for both these before I could reach Sion, I got a lad from the châlet to point out this commencement of my route to me, and to keep me in his eye till I should be on the footway leading up the precipices, that at any rate I might not *start* in a wrong direction.

This I soon reached, and was led by it in short and uneven zig-zags partly among the rocky frag-

ments fallen from above, and partly on the edge of one of the furrows worn by avalanches and torrents, gradually higher and higher above the little hollow where I had passed the night, till I came to the base of the more precipitous part of the mountain. It then commenced winding along the face of the rock, up and down, as it was practicable, till it became a narrow slippery footway, with a perpendicular wall of shaly rock to the right, and an awfully profound abyss to the left. Had I not become by practice a tolerable mountaineer, and my brain much steadier than even in the preceding year, I had not dared to tread over many a portion of the track, and turn many a dizzy corner, which I now found means carefully and steadily to weather. The morning had promised well, with a brisk breeze and clear sky; had it not been so, I should hardly have ventured to traverse this path alone. I could not resist the conviction which I had been strengthened in, that there was a degree of unusual risk in making the attempt, even under the most favourable circumstances; but habit and success had given me the temper to hazard something without much torment from my conscience.

I therefore think it just to own, that I felt something like anxiety creeping over my merry morning thoughts, and damping my wonder and enthusiasm, when I observed bodies of thick white mist beginning to rise among the heights across the valley, and fly more and more towards that part of the chain where the Rawyl was situated.

When about 1,500 feet above the Iffigenthal, the path-way becomes more and more hazardous. It leads over the steep courses of avalanches, partly

filled with undermined drifts of snow. Here one cascade from the higher part of the precipices flies over the head of the passenger as he creeps between it and the rock; and there, in a black and dismal rift round which the pathway winds, a second falls upon the very ledge along which you pass, and sweeps down the precipice below you. To be caught in this portion of the passage by a tornado or a violent thunder-gust, which instantly adds to the volume of these cascades, can hardly fail to entail loss of life, which, in this part particularly, not unfrequently occurs in bad weather, and early in the spring.

After an hour and a half's climb I reached the summit of the precipices without accident, and, on turning the last ledge, had the grief to see all the higher parts of the mountain before me buried in impenetrable mist. I grant, that on seeing this I closed my teeth with something like repentance, for I instantly comprehended all the danger of proceeding in a region where one single direction alone could possibly be either safe or right, and all others attended not merely with risk, but the almost absolute certainty of destruction. The pathway up the precipices had emerged upon a flat, of the extent of which I was of course no judge, partly loose wet shale, and partly thick grass, on neither of which the footstep of a casual passenger can make an impression likely to last even many hours in a region where the snow, rain, and wind are always liable to change the appearance of the surface. Thus I was even at a loss to say whether my next step from the brink of the precipice was to be taken to the right or left. My first object was to make myself quite

sure of the figure of the spot where I was emerging from the precipices, which without such observation might be lost to me by a casual bewilderment if I only advanced ten paces into the mist. To return was still in my power, but I could not resolve to do so. After breathing awhile, and putting myself in the best trim my means would allow, I began to pry about to see if I could not discover some trace of the continuation of the path I had hitherto followed.

After many a careful advance and return to my first post, and many minutes spent in an anxious kind of reconnoitre, my eye was attracted to some indentures at the edge of a drift of snow; and these, after a careful examination, I felt convinced had once been footmarks, though now almost eradicated by the weather. As this bank of snow lay in the right direction, and my own footsteps on it would be my clue in returning, should I find advance impracticable, I proceeded upon it. I could distinguish that it was a bed of no great breadth, lying in a steep gully between two ridges, and that was all. Here and there I found a spot where, from circumstances, the footmarks were more distinct, and then again lost them entirely for many minutes.

I had proceeded in this manner for about half an hour, during which time the gloom appeared to increase, and put me to no little perplexity. However, I floundered forward with as good hope as I could indulge, though not without many an interval of grievous suspicion; for the snow began to assume more and more the appearance of ice the further I advanced; so much so, that, with the increasing difficulty of my path, I began to put more credence in

an idea that had struck me when I first observed the track, that it might be only that of a chamois-hunter, and would lead eventually on to the glaciers. Suddenly, I observed the mist give some faint tokens of dispersion, and could distinguish, at some distance, and high above me, what seemed to be a rocky outlet, bounding the gully in which I had been advancing. To gain this I put forth my strength, but the snow becoming steeper and steeper, an unwary step prostrated me on my side, and I was carried down the frozen declivity with a violence and rapidity which accelerated every yard. Two attempts to stop myself, by thrusting my alpenstock into the snow, failed, though both somewhat retarded the swiftness of my descent. A third, made more warily, and with a desperate exertion, succeeded; and after lying two or three minutes where I stopped, to recover breath, and I may almost say recollection, for the suddenness and rapidity of the motion had made my brain spin, I once more regained my footing. I was a little bruised from having been carried over some fragments of stone lying on the surface; somewhat disheartened with having descended in twenty seconds or less what had taken me full ten minutes to mount, and a little sore in the idea of having a second slide, if I should succeed in making good the advance I had lost.

In undertaking this labour a second time, it may be believed I did it warily enough; for at every step I took care to provide a tolerably sure footing in the snow; and between every movement, when I reached the hazardous acclivity, down went my spiked staff a foot and a half beneath the surface. At length, I gained my point, and at the same moment upon

reaching the outlet, as it proved to be, I emerged upon firm ground, and into clear warm sunshine. I have seldom experienced a more sudden and complete change than that which now fell to my lot. A few minutes before, I had been in comparative darkness, trouble, and difficulty; and, what was still worse, great doubt and uncertainty; chilled to the bone by the mist, and fagged with what appeared to be useless exertion; now, certain of my course, with a track before me too evident to be suspected; over my head, the warm sun and the blue sky; and around me, one of those magnificent scenes which I always deemed full compensation for many a heavy step, and doubtful moment. The mists below were now rapidly dispersing, and the spectacle on every side became momentarily more magnificent. From the elevated point which I had now reached, I at first seemed raised but few feet above a rolling ocean of mist, of the most dazzling whiteness, which stretched over the whole country beneath me. Out of this rose all the higher glaciers and peaks of the chain, with the red and purple of their naked rocks exquisitely blended with the violet and silver of the snows and glaciers interspersed among them; and over all, a sky of the most delicious blue it is possible to conceive. Soon the vapour began to dissipate; and a vast rent gradually forming in the centre of the portion immediately beneath me, I was enabled to contemplate the bottom of the great hollow out of which I had ascended, and could distinguish the clump of chalets in which I had found my night's shelter, still enveloped in deep shade. Another five minutes, and the mist had become yet more broken; through it I could then see the long

hollow valley of the Simmenthal running to the northward, with its innumerable châlets, villages, and pastures; and ere long, not a speck of vapour was to be seen in the vast extent of mountain scenery spread before me, and not a shadow upon the country but what the huge bulk of the mountains themselves cast in long ragged figures from the eastward.

In resuming my way, I passed from this point into a deep hollow, occupied by a small lake, and surrounded by large blocks of rock, and patches of unmelted and discoloured snow; and thence reached the summit of another acclivity by following a faint track. Here, upon the highest summit the wind blew so piercingly cold, that I felt half frozen, and yet no garden could vie with the brilliant display of colours, in the dwarf alpine plants which covered every inch of mould interspersed among the rocks forming the crest of the mountain.

The head of this mountain*, like that of the Sannetsch, is very broad and extended, so that the N. and S. declivities are several miles distant from each other. It was very fortunate that I was favoured with perfectly clear and fine weather while traversing this wide plateau. For, even with all the advantages I possessed in this respect, I felt myself frequently so completely bewildered, that I am convinced, if the mist had returned, or bad weather set in, I should never have been able to extricate myself.

I am aware that to such as have never been in a country like this, I should find it next to impossible

* The Rawyl, 8,050 feet above the sea.

to explain wherein all this difficulty consists. Even individuals who may have been much in mountainous countries, and perhaps traversed these very passes, but in company, and with guides, though able to understand these difficulties to a certain degree, would scarcely be capable of comprehending their full extent. To do so, a man must have felt what it is to be his own pioneer, his own counsellor in difficulty, and to risk every thing in his own individual person. There are fifty places in the passage of such a mountain, where a solitary wanderer must pause in perplexity, weigh the for and against, and feel that his safety must rest upon his ultimate decision, which would be passed unnoticed by the party who repose implicit confidence in their guide. So, when I speak of the perplexing character of a tract of country, I must not always be considered to mean the presence of the abyss, the glacier, the torrent, or the course of the headlong avalanche; for the passage of such, however perilous, is in general evident, it being impossible to traverse them by any other than a particular track, which is commonly well defined; but parts of the mountains where there are none of these dangers, and where a guided party would never dream of peril. Such are the long pathless waste, the bare head of the mountain, fields of loose shale or bog, which retain no track for any length of time together; places where the tempest and the torrent have grooved ten thousand furrows, where it requires a practised and sagacious eye to distinguish the trace of footsteps, even where they exist; to see where the earth or moss had been depressed or worn by the casual passenger, or the surface of the rock a little tinged by the iron

of a shoe or hoof. The reader will easily perceive, that in parts where even these faint indications are wanting, perplexity is excusable, and the utmost caution necessary,

The best theoretical knowledge of the face of a country like this, advisable and even necessary as its acquisition may be, together with all the aids derived from the best maps and descriptions, must often be insufficient to direct the traveller among the minute details of real nature. The weather must indeed be obscure, and the individual bewildered, who has not a general idea of the cardinal points, even when circumstances are not the most favourable; yet a general idea of the direction in which the different points and objects lie, is seldom sufficient. No direct line of route can be observed at a venture upon such an incumbered and varied surface, as that generally existing on the heads of these passes, where you have frequently to tack alternately east and west to advance south. I have often, as may be imagined, been in the greatest dilemma, in the course of these solitary wanderings; and, in making my decision, have in the end not unfrequently found, that I had decided wrong, thereby incurring needless expenditure of time and strength; while, on the other hand, I have often had reason to lift my heart to God, to bless him for the guidance of his providence, when, without clue of any kind, and hoping against hope, I have, in making choice between many probable or improbable ways, found myself extricated.

When I gained the southern brow of the mountain, I came in sight of almost precisely the same magnificent view which had greeted me last year

from the Sanetsch, with this exception, that the Matterhorn was now more directly before me. This noble mountain is flanked by splendid glaciers descending into the three vales of Eringer, Einfisch, and Turtman. Here I was rather surprised at finding myself on the verge of a second line of precipices, somewhat resembling those on the Berne side of the mountain, but very inferior in height. A zigzag pathway conducted me to their foot, and to the head of the deep valley running down towards the Rhone. The traveller now finds himself on the borders of a torrent formed by the junction of the waters of many cascades, tumbling from enormous rocks of shale which tower on every side; and it is natural to suppose that nothing more is required than to follow its course, descending deeper and deeper down the long-drawn valley which narrows in the perspective before you, till you emerge in the Val-lais, on the banks of the Rhone. So I thought, but found myself greatly deceived. The river flows in too deep and too savage a channel to admit the possibility of a footway, and I found I must bear to the right, ascend, and traverse another provokingly high and steep mountain, and scramble for hours in wretched footpaths in the fir forests, without water and in intolerable heat, before I could reach the first village, Ayent.

It is singular what sudden extremes of heat and cold the human body is capable of enduring with apparent insensibility, at least without perceptible bad effects. In the early morning I have often been half-frozen; some hours after have panted in a burning atmosphere at least 90 deg. in the shade, and in

the evening been again benumbed in a climate several degrees below the freezing point.

Among the many cascades on the southern declivities of the Rawyl, I noticed in particular one, as I descended the southern line of precipices, of an uncommonly fine and singular appearance, bursting out of a black cleft in the face of a broad and precipitous rock in five or six distinct columns, and afterwards forming a fine wild tumble of foaming water.

It had always struck me, that there is a near approach in general resemblance in the inhabitants of the Vallais to the Italians; as to the males at least, they are much swarthier, and have much more expression and licence in their dark eyes, than any of their Swiss neighbours. Their houses, mules, and even postures, often brought the Italian to my remembrance. On my entering Ayent, about two miles above Sion, I went in search of some kind of refreshment, which the abstinence and violent exertion of the last forty-six hours had rendered very desirable. I was informed by a peasant, lolling by the road side, whose fierce grin, quick eye, and lank hair, would have rendered him a good study for a bandit, that there was no auberge or cabaret in the village; but on seeing that I was faint with the heat and long march, he immediately offered me wine,—took me to his cottage, where his wife, a tall masculine woman, with a goitre as large as a pumpkin at the side of her throat, quickly brought me a large pewter flaggon, containing a quart or upwards of the *vin ordinaire* of the country, which I found delicious, though I dare say it was bad enough. Having answered all the questions the curiosity of my host

and three or four bony neighbours tempted them to ask concerning the passage of the Rawyl, and the far country from which I came, I set forward again, with the greater number of my prejudices against the Vallaisans drowned in the wine they had given me with such true hospitality; and made up my mind to like their looks always in future, with a mental reservation unfavourable to the *Cretins*, towards whom I continued to cherish an unconquerable dislike, and that kind of pity which is coupled with too much disgust to be allied to love.

The peasantry of the Bas-Vallais speak a most perplexing patois. Happily most can understand, and perhaps speak, a little German or French.

About one o'clock in the day I entered Sion, and took my quarters at La Croix Blanche. The churches of this old town are curious. The situation of the three castles, Majoria, Valéria, and Tourbillon, is commanding; indeed, the geological formation of that part of the valley of the Rhone, from Siders to Sion, is well worth a leisurely survey. The flat of the valley is continually broken by isolated and lofty masses of rock resembling those on which these castles are built—many of them crowned in like manner. The water in this portion of the Vallais is execrable and very injurious to the health. In the town and neighbourhood I was content to remain during the rest of the day, looking anxiously for a continuation of fair weather for the morrow. Towards sunset it shewed symptoms of being very unsettled, though a certain species of beautiful green frog, called in German laubfrosch (*rana arborea*), which is employed in many parts of the continent as a barometer, sat pertinaciously at the top of his

ladder, thereby announcing fair weather. They are kept in a vase half filled with water, and a miniature ladder from the top to the bottom. In fair weather they sit at the rim, and in changeable or wet, plunge and lie at the bottom.

Whoever has passed a summer's night at Sion or Martigny, will be ready to sympathize with me, and anticipate the complaints which, as a way-worn traveller, I might be tempted to indulge, in the recollection of the execrably bad night I had to put up with. These towns are proverbially the paradise of vermin, the cities of refuge of all those tribes whom cleanliness and care have expelled from other localities. Sleep was of course out of the question. I found a host of enemies in my quarters and neighbourhood, of all classes and capabilities, and had time enough, thanks to their persevering attention, to distinguish, examine, and class them all. There were the heavy-armed, the light-armed, and the pioneer plying within, and the powers of the air without, who tickled, and buzzed, and sang about my quarters, till my patience and spirit of meek endurance were almost as much tempted as those of good Saint Anthony. My reader will give me credit, that what I was suffering was not to be accounted a joke, when I add, that I heard a poor gentleman, in a chamber boarded off from the one I had the honour to occupy, sigh and groan aloud, at intervals, from bed-time till about one o'clock; and if any doubt had possessed my mind, respecting the cause of his disquietude, it was effectually removed, when, just after the bell of the Jesuits' church had tolled one, his patience gave way, and I was electrified, by hearing a thundering

imprecation in good English, followed by the pathetic complaint—*‘they bite like the Devil!’*

There is a certain saint, of the third or fourth magnitude, in the Romish calendar, I believe Saint Egidius by name, who, being the patron of vermin of every description, should really see to it, that better discipline is kept up among the tribes under his especial jurisdiction, in the Roman Catholic towns at least.

July 22nd.—In that half-waking, half-sleeping state in which a bad night is generally spent—my imagination had been miserably occupied by the dangers of the pass I had traversed the preceding morning, and my nerves infinitely more sensible and irritable in the dreaming recollection than they had been in actual peril. This moment I was hanging over the precipice—another whirling down the ice—and thus, in addition to the cause of distress before alluded to, continually starting convulsively from my broken slumbers; it is therefore no wonder that I arose feverish and unrefreshed. The morning air is the best and a sovereign remedy for this kind of fever, both in body and mind; I consequently breakfasted, and prepared to leave the town about six o’clock. Though the weather over head was fair, the general state of the sky and wind, and the index of the barometer, seemed to indicate but a dreary day. But on approaching the little stand where the frog was placed, and seeing him quite at the top of his ladder, I cared neither for the signs of the weather nor the barometer, and set forward. However, on emerging from the west gate of the town, I saw a fierce storm coming up the valley,

and had to put back and remain in my quarters for a couple of hours, during which time the rain fell in torrents. When, however, it had spent its strength, encouraged by a gleam of sunshine I quitted the town afresh, and took the route for Martigny.

It may be recollected, that I passed this very line of road last summer, after crossing the Sanetsch-pass, and complained heavily of the ennui excited by the monotonous straightness of the greater part.

I had almost vowed at that time never again to attempt it on foot, and, when I found that my plan led me this year also from Sion to Martigny, had intended to exchange it for the more varied route on the right bank of the Rhone. Finding, however, that this was several miles round, and on the sunny side of the valley, which is as hot as Calcutta, I was constrained, by my wish to get to Martigny as soon as possible, to betake myself to the regular route. The first portion of the road, where it runs under the mountain on the right bank, is picturesque and amusing; then comes the bridge of the Rhone which you cross, and passing through the village of Riddes, the second and disagreeable division opens before you.

Though the weather had been fair, with fine gleams of sunshine, I could see from the thick clouds and tempests of rain on the mountains on either side, that there was rough work in the higher country, and congratulated myself upon having crossed the Rawyl yesterday, since to-day it would have been impossible.

My first care, on my arrival in Martigny, was to find the convent where the monks of St. Bernard take up their abode, as I had letters of recommend-

ation to a gentleman of the convent, whom I fancied I might meet with here; nor was I mistaken. The repairs going on in the convent had rendered it necessary for one or two of their number to find other lodgings, *ad interim*, and accordingly I found this gentleman and another of his order established for the present in this town.

They received me with politeness, and furnished me with a few lines to one of their brethren, as I proposed proceeding to the Great Saint Bernard without loss of time. There was little to be remarked in the convent of which they were inhabitants. Their habit consisted of the close black vestment of the order, which is properly Augustine, with a narrow white tape passing over each shoulder, and down one side; a close black stock, slightly embroidered with white beads; and a high sugarloaf cap, without a rim, terminated by a round woollen tuft.

While we were in conversation, the superior entered the apartment, habited in like manner. He ranks as Bishop in the Roman hierarchy. He was a gentlemanly man, of a calm and mild cast of features, and, like the other monks, remarkably lively and animated in conversation.

After about an hour's stay, I quitted Martigny, with the intention of reaching Liddes, five leagues distant, in the course of the evening; the day being too far spent to allow of my making good my ascent to the convent of the Great St. Bernard itself, which was four leagues further.

The scenery of the line of valleys leading up towards this well-known mountain did not appear to me peculiarly striking. After entering the valley of

the Drance, the route led me through the villages of Bovernier and St. Branchier, to the opening into the Val de Bagnes, remarking in my progress many a trace of the horrible deluge which issued from it in 1818, in consequence of the bursting of the glacier; the relation of which is still fresh in the memory of the present generation. Here the road to the Great Saint Bernard turns to the right into the Val d'Entremonts.

The finest point of view on the whole road is when you have passed Orsières, whose deep valley joining with the Val de Ferret, and commanded by the precipitous Mont Catogne and his neighbours, is well worth a momentary pause. The vale all the way from Martigny to Liddes is remarkably well cultivated, in parts where it is sufficiently wide to admit of cultivation, and produces a considerable quantity of corn. The greatest portion of this was already cut. The vines in the lower part are but few, and tended much less carefully than those on the Rhine and Jura. They are on that very account more picturesque. The mountains in the lower part of the passage seemed to be principally shale, and the water execrable. The inhabitants and their habitations assume more and more of the Italian air, and are certainly not improved by it.

July 23rd.—As I had only four leagues to walk this morning to the hospital, I took my time, and leaving Liddes about eight in the morning, proceeded up the valley. Carriages go no farther than this village, and beyond, mules are the only conveyance for such as do not use their legs.

The village of St. Pierre, about a league higher,

is built at the brink of the deep and compressed gorge of Valsoré. The latter contains several fine cascades in the recesses of the mountains to the left. Soon after passing this village the road becomes more encumbered and mountainous, though easy in comparison with other passes. The rocks are quite reddened by the rhododendron. The last league of the ascent I found more difficult than I had anticipated, as the weather, which had favoured me hitherto, began to change for the worse. A thick mist overspread the mountains, and it hailed and snowed violently. Indeed, so dense was the mist, that when the track led me on to that part of the mountain which was still covered with the unmelted snow of the preceding winter, I found myself more than once excessively bewildered, and quite without track. By returning, however, and a careful examination on every side, I hit again upon the right path, and after half an hour's fatiguing climb over the snow and ice, got into shelter just as the increasing violence of the wind and snow-storm began to make shelter necessary.

The Hospital or Convent of the Great St. Bernard is situated on the elevated ridge which runs between Mont Velan to the east, and the Point de Dronaz to the west, and is computed to be at the elevation of 8,200 feet above the level of the sea. As to the peculiar features of its position, I am able to give no description from my own observation; the mist being so dense, and the snow falling so incessantly during the thirty hours I spent there, that I am even unable to describe the exterior figure and dimensions of the edifices composing it. However, that has

been often done by others. The principal building seems to be a massive and substantial erection, to which important additions were then making. The ground floor is used for stabling and magazines, and the first for offices. The principal apartments are upon the second story, and into one of these, called the parlour, the visitor is conducted immediately on his arrival. A few minutes after my entrance, the bell of the refectory rang for dinner, which is here always at half-past eleven. As there were several strangers, a separate table was laid out for them in the parlour, under the superintendence of a canon, bearing the title of *Clavendier*, to whose care and attention strangers are committed. He was assisted in these duties by a young monk, who became afterwards my companion during the time I passed here.

After dinner all the guests, with the exception of myself, quitted the monastery, in spite of the heavy snow, and descended either to Martigny, or into the Val d'Aoste; when I found myself alone with the young monk, who professed his readiness to give me any information I wished to obtain, and to be my indoors cicerone, as excursions beyond the precincts were out of the question.

The convent contains a small museum of mineralogical and geological specimens, and of various antiquities found on the site of the Roman temple of Jupiter on this mountain. Many among the latter are curious. They consist chiefly of various inscriptions on brass coins of the Roman emperors, and fragments of brass and metal *penates*. Several of the inscriptions were quite perfect, and appeared to be principally votive tablets. I saw in this museum four birds of a singular species of ptarmigan, found

in abundance in the neighbourhood of the hospital. In winter, they are perfectly white; in spring, a few black feathers are observable; in summer, the mottled plumage; and in autumn the black predominates. They call them *herbene*. At three o'clock the bell rang for vespers. The chapel is large, the choir lofty and airy. All the monks attended, with a white robe thrown over their black scapulary, and a red vest over the white. They still wore their conical caps. The body of the chapel under the organ-loft was occupied by a number of peasants, partly Piedmontese, and partly Vallaisans; and I thought I never saw a more uncouth assemblage. The service was conducted in the ordinary manner, and lasted about an hour and a half.

I afterwards retired to the parlour, and was soon joined by the young monk before mentioned, who might be about twenty-three years of age, and had already taken the vows five years. To him I am obliged for the greater proportion of my gleanings respecting this interesting spot.

The order of Bernardines was properly Augustine, till moulded into its present form by St. Bernard, some time in the course of the 10th century, (A. D. 962). This saint, as the legend hath it, was a person of some consequence and property in the vicinity of Fontaine in Burgundy, and shewed his first signal proof of sanctity on no less an occasion than his wedding-day, when, after having plighted his troth to a wife, he suddenly repented, and, the same evening, forsaking both his bride and his castle, fled into Italy. He came and lived for some time as a monk at Aosta. Amongst the 160 monasteries and convents he is said to have founded or re-established,

this is by no means the meanest, and probably has survived most of the rest. The convent which he founded as a refuge for travellers on this mountain was burnt to the ground shortly after his death, and the more ancient part of the present structure was erected on its site. Many additions have been made to it at various times; and a large building, called the *Hôtel de Saint Louis*, has been erected at a small distance, for the convenience of additional lodging for domestics and others attached to the convent.

The number of the Bernardines has varied from time to time; at present it consists of twenty or twenty-five monks; all, I believe, without one exception, natives of the countries to the north of the Alps. This is in consequence of a process instituted many years ago, at the court of Rome, about the nomination of a superior. At that time the nomination was claimed by the King of Sardinia, and was usually bestowed by him upon some young noble of his court, who never troubled his head about the poor monks and their convent, but enjoyed the bulk of the revenue of the order as a sinecure, living at court, while the canons were in the greatest distress and poverty, and quite unable to fulfil the ends of their order. In consequence of the verdict given by the Pope in favour of the appeal made to him, the nomination was put into the hands of the order itself, and confirmed to them, on condition of their relinquishing their revenues and lands on the Italian side of the Alps; and thus all they receive at present from the Italian princes has the name of *donation* only. The superior holds the office for life, and has the powers of a bishop. He is chosen from their number in a general chapter of

the order. His place of abode is Martigny. A prior, resident in the convent, is elected every four years. Other officers for the interior government of the various departments connected with the hospital and its revenues, as well as for the purpose of collecting alms, by which, in a great measure, the institution is now upheld, are not wanting.

They have for some years relinquished the small hospital, at one time tenanted, on the Little St. Bernard, neither their revenues nor their numbers being adequate to its support. They are, however, in hopes of establishing a bye-convent on the Simplon. Besides their small convent in Martigny, one of their number, generally such as ill health or old age has reduced to the necessity of living in a milder atmosphere, has lodgings at St. Pierre on the Swiss side of the mountain, and St. Remy on the Italian. No novices may be taken under sixteen years of age. Sometimes many years elapse without any addition being made to the order. This was the case some few years ago, and the number of monks was so reduced, the decline of health in many so apparent, and so long a time gone by without any individual offering himself for the noviciate, that the Bernardines began to dread the extinction of their order. Suddenly, seven young peasants presented themselves as candidates, but their zeal was illusory; for not one of that number could stand the rigours of the noviciate. To be sure, as one of the canons told me, they were proved to the very last extremity. The noviciate lasts but one year; but the novice is subjected to a very severe discipline; religious and penitential exercises during the day, and exposure to the most horrible weather at night; watching and

fasting to boot. If he perseveres, he then takes the vows of celibacy, obedience, and self-denial, and is admitted as a member of the order for life. They are bound by the rules to rise at four every morning, and attend matins in the chapel; after that, religious exercises till half-past six, when they break their fast. Then follows early mass. At half-past eleven they dine, and are no ascetics, in the refectory at least.

For half an hour after dinner, they remain together in conversation; then study till three in the afternoon, when they attend vespers; they sup at six, and study *ad libitum* afterwards. They are enjoined to lodge and board all strangers and passengers at all seasons, and, if there is danger, to assist them with guides in traversing the mountain, without charge and cost. They are able to furnish as many as sixty or seventy beds for strangers on an emergency, and it often happens that several hundreds are assisted with food and shelter in the course of a single day. In winter, their rules command them to send every day, be the weather fair or otherwise, two able and powerful men, attached to the household, and called Maroniers, who are perfectly accustomed to the mountains, the one towards the Italian side, and the other towards the Vallais. These traverse a certain portion of the pass backwards and forwards the whole day, attended by one of the great dogs, thereby keeping a path open in the snow, and being on the watch for passengers.

If the Maronier meets with any persons bewildered or exhausted, or if the sagacious companion indicates by his movements that any unfortunate being is under the snow, he returns with all speed to the

hospital and gives the alarm. Four or more of the monks then instantly set out with such remedies and restoratives as are at hand, to be used instantly if the object of their benevolence is not too far gone. Four carry the body, and the others go forward to trample the snow, which is often above twenty feet in depth, and give more facility to the advance of their brethren.

Cold water, with ice immersed in it, is prepared, and the body placed in it, the instant they regain the convent. This is almost the only, and the most efficacious remedy, they are able to make use of. If it fails in restoring animation, all hope is at an end. The same simple remedy is resorted to, if the limbs of the patient are partially frozen, and seldom fails of success. From this prompt exertion and treatment, the lives of many have been saved.

The dogs are of a large, and, I need not add, a sagacious breed, originally from Spain. They are far from being numerous. There were only four at the convent, and some young ones training in a *châlet* lower down the mountain. The largest, Jupiter, was the general favourite at the time of my visit, as the most sagacious and useful of the race. He had saved the lives of a woman and child a short time before. It appears that he knew that some one had passed the hospital, and set off, apparently from mere curiosity, to see who it was. His absence was observed by one of the Maroniers, who followed his trail, and found him posted over the drift where the poor woman and child were about to perish.

The preceding winter (1825-6) had been signalized by the loss of three of the domestics belonging to the convent, and a traveller whom they were con-

ducting to the hospital. As the circumstances attending this accident may illustrate the peculiar danger of the service in which these worthy monks are engaged, I shall relate them at length, as communicated to me.—It was after a violent snow-storm of several days' continuance, which had kept all the inhabitants of the convent close within their walls, that a partial brightening in the weather on the 17th *December* emboldened them to dispatch three of their domestics down the Italian side of the mountain, to escort a small party of travellers, who had been detained in the convent, and at the same time to fetch their usual supply of fresh provisions from the first Italian village, St. Remy, about a league down the pass. This party was accompanied by two of the dogs, Jupiter and a younger one. The day closed, night set in, and, to the surprise of the monks, no servants re-appeared. However, they lulled their fears, by persuading themselves that their Maroniers, not daring to re-ascend in the dusk, had staid at St. Remy, and trusted to see them return with the provisions early on the following morning. The morning came—noon arrived—the shade of evening again closed the short-lived day, and still no tidings of their servants. However, during the course of this day, two of the monks worked their way, after a whole hour's struggle in the snow, which was many feet deep, to the lower end of the lake, near which the convent is situated, and reached a point about three minutes' ordinary walk from the hospital, from whence the greater part of the downward route towards St. Remy could be distinguished. They now saw that the whole valley was covered by the wrecks of a series of avalanches—and returned, fearing the

worst; but still hoped against hope, that the adventurers might have reached St. Remy, and been detained there. It was not till the third day after their departure, that their suspicions were verified beyond all doubt. On that day, the *estafette* from St. Remy arrived at the convent, followed by poor Jupiter. He brought word that the Maroniers had arrived safe with their companions at the village, and after some short stay, had set off on their return, accompanied by a traveller who wished to pass to the Swiss side of the Alps. Nothing more was to be learnt from him, except, that, about an hour after, Jupiter returned alone, dreadfully fatigued, and made it to be understood, by his howling and anxiety, that some misfortune had befallen his companions.

The cause of the disaster was now no longer a matter of doubt, and after some months was rendered certain by the discovery of the bodies. It appears, that, when about half a league on their way back, they were suddenly arrested and overwhelmed by a tremendous avalanche from the slopes of Mont Mort, which in its headlong course carried the party for above a mile down the mountain, and buried them with the younger dog deep under the snow. By some means Jupiter kept nearer the edge, or the surface, and, when the force of the avalanche was spent, extricated himself. It was judged, that he had attempted to make his way up the mountain towards the hospital, but such was the impediment offered to his struggle by the immense mass of soft snow, that he was forced to return in the bed of a torrent to St. Remy. They described him there as whining and "*weeping*" the whole night.

From December, when this event happened, till the beginning of June, when they found the first body, by the melting of the snow, the monks had no direct idea of the part of the pass where they might lie. Three were found, not far from each other, in a deep gully, but so disfigured, that the bodies could only be recognised by their clothing; and the fourth not till the beginning of the very month of my visit, still with eight feet of snow over him.

The Piedmontese, or Vallaisans, now and then commit a murder upon some unfortunate individual, in his passage of the mountain. The former, for the most part, carry long knives in a slit along the thigh, and are so expert in the use of them, that, I was assured, they could mortally wound a person at the distance of eight paces, by darting it in a peculiar manner. But lately a poor smuggler was observed by some of these miscreants to have money on his person at Liddes. He was consequently dogged over the mountain by sixteen men, who ate at the hospital in passing, and were observed to sharpen their knives. Part of their number then went on before, and others following them, they murdered him and hid his body in the snow, where it was found in the summer.

The monks seem for the most part hale, strong, and hearty men, who, in spite of constant colds and indigestions, live apparently well and comfortable together, laugh heartily, and seem fond of the company of strangers; yet few of them live to an advanced age. They have no expences, clothes and other necessities being provided them. Each is allowed to take a fortnight's excursion in the course

of summer, and receives twenty *batzen*, or half-a-crown, for his travelling expenditure.

I could not avoid a smile and expression of surprise at this information ; but my young informant added, that this small sum was not only thought sufficient in a general way, but some of their number contrive so well in walking from one parsonage to another, and boarding in the monasteries, that they are able to save it entire towards the purchase of some book or other innocent indulgence. This, with another twenty batzen at the close of the year, forms their whole private revenue. Purchases of every kind are, by the rules, immediately to be submitted to the censorship of the superior.

There is a tolerable library of Latin theological works attached to the convent, to which the monks have access, under certain restrictions.

At six, or soon after, supper was announced, and I was invited to join the brethren in their refectory. The repast was preceded and terminated by a long Latin grace with responses. The prior, a most friendly and gentlemanly man, presided, and the conversation was as free and unrestrained as the meal was substantial, and the wine excellent. The latter is chiefly of the growth of Italy, and generally forms a portion of the donation from his majesty of Sardinia.

When the hour of rest arrived, which was early enough, a domestic conducted me to my chamber, which was a long apartment with a low arched roof. The night was excessively cold ; so much so, that I found writing out of the question, and had to take refuge in bed, where I enjoyed undisturbed rest, not forgetting that I was reposing on the most elevated

point in the old world upon which man has established a permanent habitation.

July 24th.—About four o'clock in the morning, a servant entered my apartment to light a fire, which was not ill-timed, as I had been already awakened by the cold. Snow had fallen during the whole night, and there was no probability of a speedy change in the weather. About seven I descended to the refectory, and found the Clavendier, and several of the monks assembled. Till ten o'clock, when a high mass was to be performed in honour of the King of Sardinia's birth-day, I occupied myself with my pen, and in a leisurely examination of the chapel. Some carved work in the choir, and the monument erected here by Buonaparte, in memory of his favorite general, Dessaix, after the battle of Marengo, in which he fell, are well worthy of notice; otherwise, there is nothing very extraordinary in either painting or ornament. The service was very splendid. Five of the canons, attired in the most superb embroidered vestments, officiated at the high altar. The *missa triumphalis*, performed on the occasion, was not a composition in unison with such an august ceremonial; a more light-minded, miserable production, I have scarcely ever heard.

The organ is good, and contains some sweet and powerful stops. Many of the official persons from various government offices in the town of Aosta usually ascend the St. Bernard to attend this service on the birth-day of their sovereign. The snow-storm, however, prevented the influx of strangers, and we were the same company this morning as

on the preceding day. At half-past eleven we dined in the refectory.

The weather on the mountain continuing so bad, I determined to set forward on my journey in the course of the afternoon, not doubting but I should find a better climate at Aosta. Besides, not being able, if I staid, to fulfil the main end of my visit, that of becoming well acquainted with the mountains in the vicinity, I did not think it right to draw too largely upon the time and hospitality of my entertainers, when it was evident they were in great confusion from the bustle and inconvenience consequent upon the new repairs. After dinner, I waded through the drifts of snow with one of the monks, to visit an isolated building a few paces from the convent, in which the dead bodies of such as have been found frozen and not known or claimed by their friends, are left to fall into gradual decay and dust. There is no possibility of practising the ordinary modes of sepulture, as the whole vicinity of the hospital consists of bare turfless rock, often covered, as during the time of my visit, with snow to a considerable depth, even in the height of summer. The monks themselves are interred in a vault under the high altar in their chapel. In this house of death, to which I found entrance by springing through the opening in the thick walls, serving at once for window and door, the bodies of these poor unfortunate wretches are placed upright round the walls, either sitting or standing, as is found convenient; and such is the clearness and purity of the air at this elevation, that far from exhaling any putrid odour, they dry up little by little and fall to dust. Their decay is so gradual,

that bodies were still pointed out to me in a partial state of preservation, which were deposited here long before the oldest monk now living can remember. It is truly a sad spectacle. No individual seems to have been left here for some years back, as the bodies are generally claimed by the relatives. One group is irresistibly affecting, even now, though, by the state of decay, I should think the bodies had been here very many years. This is a poor mother, and a child at her breast, who were found frozen, stiff, and past all recovery. The bone of the mother's arm can still be distinguished among the mass of half-mouldered and shapeless bones and rags, pressing the head of her infant to her bosom. This needs no comment; but may be considered as making a mute but powerful appeal to the best feelings of the stranger. No request is ever made by the monks for charitable donations, or remuneration of any kind, but the box in the chapel is seldom passed by unnoticed by those who have been the objects of their hospitable attentions, and feel admiration for the purposes and noble ends of this singular institution.

After expressing my esteem for the inhabitants of the convent, and the remembrance I should ever retain of their kind attentions, I dispensed with their offer of a guide, and set off on my descent of the southern side of the mountain.

The new snow was at first full two feet deep, but diminished rapidly in quantity as I advanced. I had not descended far below the level of the lake, when the sleet was exchanged for a drizzle, and another mile lower down the weather was perfectly fair. In less than an hour, I reached the first Italian

village of St. Remy. The descent to this point is very rapid, much more so than the acclivity on the Swiss side of the mountain.

Here began the Italian inquisition: my person and knapsack were searched for contraband goods; and though of course none were found, the douanier seemed to have a wonderful inclination to believe that I was really a smuggler. A pair of pocket pistols were however condemned, and marked for seizure at the next station of carabinieri at Etroubles. Five or six miles' further walk brought me to this place, and to the barrier guarding the bridge over the stream, which I must cross in my way to Aosta. Here I was stopped a second time, by a soldier, who demanded my passport.

It is unnecessary to enter into a detail of the vexations to which I now became exposed, in consequence of some silly and unimportant informality in this document. By the carabinieri I was made over to the brigadier, and a council was held, in which it was at first decided, that I ought neither to be permitted to proceed nor to return; then it was thought advisable to search my person once more, and examine my papers. I own I was irritated and vexed enough, yet could not repress a smile, when I saw them laying their heads together to espy treason in a scrap book, full of every species of scribbling, scraps of poetry, caricatures, extracts from various authors, and shreds of music. Nothing was to be done; they had the play in their own hands, and they contrived to keep me in hot water for two or three hours. It appeared to me that they feared, if I was allowed to pass into Italy, with my

pole, knapsack, and sketch-book, I should certainly be the means of blowing the Holy Alliance to the moon, or at least of producing a serious rupture between the King of Sardinia, and his friend and protector, the Emperor of Austria; so, as may be conceived, these poor understrappers were in a fearful dilemma. At last, they resolved that I should be allowed to proceed to Aosta, with a scrawl upon my passport, which forced me immediately to present myself before the higher powers, there '*pour être pourvu de nouveaux ordres,*' under pain of being taken up, '*comme suspect.*'

This farce being ended, though I own I felt it might turn out none for me, if I fell into equally zealous, ignorant, or vicious hands at Aosta, I crossed the bridge, and continued my route down the valley towards that city, making up my mind, that the moment I saw my way clear before me, I would turn my back upon Turin, (which city I had intended to visit), never rest till I had once more crossed the Swiss frontier, and got out of the atmosphere of a country, where, it seemed, I was to meet with little but disappointment and vexation.

Such thoughts rather distracted my attention from the scenery with which I was surrounded for the next two or three hours, therefore my observations must be brief.

Soon after passing Gignod, the valley begins to open, and to abound in beautiful scenery. Fine trees, and wide and fertile pastures, first give tokens of my descent into a region possessing a very different climate than that in which I had been for many hours. Vines on their espaliers succeed, and, about two miles

further, the delightful vale of Aosta, with the city of that name, opens gradually at the termination of the valley.

At the Bureau de Police I fell into good hands, and found no great difficulty in explaining the mistake, and having it rectified; yet I remained firm in my resolution of getting out of the country with as little delay as possible. I therefore got the passport signed to go over the Little St. Bernard into Savoy. I must do justice to the gentleman at the head of the police here, to say that he apologized for the manner in which I had been treated on the mountain, and said he would forward a reprimand to the offending parties, though I did not precisely require that kind of indifferent satisfaction for the insult offered to my self-esteem.

A good inn, and a tranquil hour or two, soon made me cease to look back upon one of the most harassing adventures I ever passed through, with more than a usual feeling of bitterness; and I enjoyed a rest only broken by imaginary skirmishes with Sardinian policemen, which tormented me quite as much as the shadows of the glaciers and precipices the night after crossing the Rawyl.

July 25th.—Far from seeking to scramble forward to Turin, the events of the preceding day had quite cured me, for the second time, of wishing to go deeper into Italy, in my present state of equipment. There would, I thought, be little wisdom in advancing further into a country where I was to be exposed, in every fresh village, to some new indignity and vexation from a faulty passport.

The system of espionage and suspicious examin-

ation, which are the sure signs of a weak and cowardly government, are unbearable to an Englishman; and, besides this, there is danger of a more alarming description hanging over a solitary wanderer on these frontiers. Let not a nervous man travel alone in this part of the world; he may see enough on the road, in the bye-ways, and in lone inns, to make him feel that his life would hang by a slender thread, if the providence of God did not watch over him, and guard him from the evil thoughts and passions of others.

The frequent recurrence of the cross by the road side, pointing out where murder has been committed, is not calculated to lessen this impression of insecurity.

The town of Aosta is most beautifully situated on the bank of the Dora, and under the shade of a finely formed and elevated group of mountains to the south. To the westward, the eye traces the fertile vale towards the mountains and glaciers to the south of Mont Blanc.

The first object of particular interest are the remains of a Roman triumphal arch, near the ruins of the amphitheatre. They are in tolerable preservation, built of a dark coloured stone, which, doubtless, was once cased over with marble. It is of the date of Augustus. There are also the fragments of a bridge of white marble at some distance below the place, and other tokens of the flourishing state of this town under the Romans. It is by no means regularly built, yet Italian architecture is always picturesque. Many of the convents are good subjects for the pencil. After spending a portion of the morning in various parts of the town, I resumed my journey, and

quitted it by the road running up the valley on the left side of the Dora.

This takes its course like others I have described in the Italian valleys, in long stretches through rich vineyards, provision grounds, orchards, and groups of magnificent walnut trees, for many leagues. Now and then an Italian villa, a village, a hamlet, or a castle, breaks the uniformity of the scene. There are numerous castles in the vale of the Dora, and many very finely situated on the bold rocky projections from the chains on either side.

After passing through St. Pierre, I crossed to the right bank by a very picturesque bridge, at the outskirts of a village.

The Italian villages are picturesque, but, beyond this, nothing more can be remarked in praise of them, as more desolate, forbidding human habitations than those of which they are generally composed, it is not easy to conceive. Always half in ruins, and otherwise built in such a confused manner, with unequal windows, blind alleys, low arched door-ways, winding staircases, and dismal-looking vaults and court-yards, that, had not the character of the people fixed upon the scenes many a dark tale of murder and crime, the spot would have suggested the *dramatis personæ*. Yet, for all this, the half-ruined edifices, the bold stone work, the projecting ledges, low roofs and arches, and windows like port-holes, are good subjects for the pencil. How different a Swiss village, and its clean-built, roomy habitations.

A second village, and second torrent rushing from the mountain to the left, diversify the road before it enters a narrow defile, the savage character of which is equally striking with that of many on the

other side of the Alps. Immense masses and blocks of rock shivered and piled upon one another, surround and overhang the road, which is cut among them, while the river works its way at a great depth beneath.

Avisé is situated upon a high precipitous mountain on the opposite bank. Its high quadrangular tower is a striking object. A wooden bridge traverses the stream about the middle of the defile, and leads to a village, of which I do not know the name. In the narrowest part are the remnants of a rude breast-work with shot-holes, and a gateway, bearing the date of the year 1795.

Crossing another bridge I proceeded along the left bank of the Dora, to La Salle and Morgex, through a varied and romantic tract of country, though bereft of its most imposing feature by the clouds which enveloped the whole of the vast form of Mont Blanc.

My night quarters were taken up at Prè St. Didier, a bathing place, about a league below Courmaieur. My impatience to get out of the country had rather increased than diminished with this day's ramble. I was here at the foot of the pass of the Little St. Bernard. Toward sunset the vapours began to set themselves in motion, and in the twilight I gazed with enthusiasm upon the huge round head of the vast mountain towards whose base I had approached.

July 26th—I have mentioned that the name of my night quarters, where I was favoured with a tumble in a suspicious-looking bed, was St. Didier, a bathing place frequented on account of its ferrugi-

nous springs. I cannot say that I like these sainted places, they have generally been fatal to me. However, I hoped the best. I knew nothing of the saint after whom it was named, any more than of St. Remy, yet trusted to fare better under his protection than I had done under that of the latter. Nevertheless, I had regarded the operations and manner of my host with an awkward uneasy feeling, I hardly know why. He had no resemblance to the good, fat, bluff-faced English landlord, who leaves the answer of the bell to his understrappers, and only makes his appearance from time to time on particular occasions, to hope you find all to your liking, and to wish you farewell. This Italian host was cast in quite another mould. He was a thin, spare, light, handy fellow, who did all himself and seemed to be every where at the same moment, observed every thing, though seemingly intent upon nothing, and all with one eye, and that his left one. His right was loosely covered with a black patch, which passed over the ridge of his nose into the shade of the dark eyebrow on the other side. This was the part of his person which drew my attention most frequently ; I could not decide whether I most disliked the eye that was put out, or the one that was left. I was annoyed by the first, because it was a deformity, and opened no inlet to divine what he was thinking of on that side of his face ; and I abominated the second, because its expression was so sinister and so varied, that it was impossible to say to what object its glance was directed.

Then his gait was unusually quick ; he carried his knees always in advance, and put his feet to the ground with the movement of a young mettlesome

nag tightly reined up. When he was spoken to, there was an affectation of extreme politeness, which was equally questionable with his ordinary grave and silent demeanour. In short I took a dislike to him, and to every thing about him, and found afterwards that in this aversion there was something of a presentiment.

A cloudless morning threw an impediment in the way of my going immediately over the Little St. Bernard. I could not, it is true, resolve to linger much longer on this side the Alps; but to stop short at St. Didier, where the intermediate eminences shut out the greater part of the vast glaciers of Mont Blanc, when an hour's walk to the opening of the gorge beyond Courmajeur would give me an unimpeded view, was equally impossible.

I therefore set forward, with the intention of returning in a few hours to St. Didier. I reached Courmajeur barely in time to have a brief but magnificent view of this immense pile of rock, ice, and snow; for, soon after, the whole became first interspersed, and then enveloped with fleecy clouds; I therefore returned half-disappointed and dissatisfied to St. Didier.

Here the treatment I met with from my one-eyed host added a fresh stimulus to my haste to get out of the toils with which I appeared to be surrounded in this corner of the country; I therefore lost no time in resuming my route.

Though the glaciers were covered with clouds, the day turned out insufferably hot.

The pass of the Little St. Bernard may be said to commence immediately behind the village by a very steep and rapid acclivity, leading into the pine fo-

rests. I had not advanced a league and a half up a very steep gorge, the rocky recesses and lonely windings of which bore an ample harvest of crosses, commemorating violent death, when I began to feel that I was very far from well. The pathway, after keeping for some time to the right of the valley, crosses to the opposite bank of the torrent, and winds gradually up the steep sides of the bare rocks on the left, by degrees conducting the traveller to a difficult portion of the passage extending to the vicinity of the bourg of La Tuille. Here, if any where in the course of this passage, Hannibal's patience and vinegar must have been in great request. Soon after passing La Tuille, and the Pont-Serrant, I could no longer conceal from myself, that, perhaps by over exertion, I had sustained some internal injury. My strength failed me minute after minute; my respiration became difficult, I shivered and burned by turns, and felt all those symptoms which betoken fever. My reflections were rather bewildering; I had no inclination to give in; and yet of what avail is the will, when the strength fails. I would willingly have eased my shoulders of my knapsack, and seated myself, but felt too weak to have resumed my burden, or my journey, and therefore kept steadily striding forward. I knew that in my peculiar situation, nothing but forward could help me; that, as I could not command the usual prescription for an attack of fever, I must have recourse to an extraordinary one, and try, by keeping in constant steady exertion, to wear out its force. Having once determined, I thought no more of weakness, and after another hour's march, came into a more open region, where the free and fresh air rendered advance easier.

To cut this adventure short, by the time I reached the site of the ci-devant hospital, now occupied in part by a miserable pot-house, I felt both health and philosophy on the return. The first, I certainly owed, under God's mercy, to my having kept steadily in motion, and the latter, to those natural good spirits which were never then depressed long together by circumstances of any kind. I saw there was no other alternative, and that I might as well make up my mind to bear the miseries which must ever be more or less yoked with much enjoyment, whether they proceed from adverse natural causes, or from the conduct of villains. As to my one-eyed landlord, the countenance of one honest man will at any time make me forget that of twenty such rascals.

The head of the pass of the Little St. Bernard is formed by a plain of some extent, stretching between the eastern and western declivities of the mountain. The ruins of the hospital are situated near the former descent, not very far from the Colonne de Joux, an isolated marble column, surmised to be the fragment of a temple.

This plain*, once probably covered by the strange and uncouth encampment of Hannibal and his Carthaginians during their two days' rest after the repulse of the mountaineers at *La Roche Blanche*†, was, in 1794, the scene of a sanguinary struggle between the French and Austrians.

The view from the western brow towards the fair valley of the Isère and the Tarantaise was unob-

* Plain of the Little St. Bernard, 7,200 feet above the sea.

† The work intitled "*A Dissertation upon Hannibal's Passage of the Alps, by a Member of the University of Oxford*," is referred to for a most entertaining examination of the claims of this pass to be the scene of that renowned march.

scured, but nevertheless regarded with no little uncertainty. My original plan had been to traverse the Allée Blanche and the Col de Seigne, instead of the Little St. Bernard, and I was not prepared to say how I should shape my route towards the Col de Bonhomme, when I should have gained the valley.

However, passing through the hamlet of St. Germain, built on a steep declivity, about two hours after I had traversed the summit, I was fortunate enough to meet with an intelligent woman who spoke French, and who answered the three questions which concerned me most; where I might find accommodation for the night,—what distance I was from the foot of the Col de Bonhomme,—and in what manner I could reach it.

In reply to the first query she gave me to understand, that there were two most excellent inns in the village of Scez, about a league and a half distant; then, that from thence to Chapui, at the foot of the Bonhomme, was four long leagues up a range of valleys, the direction of which she pointed out to me. All this gave me great satisfaction, broken only by the discovery that my map and note-book were both missing, and that now I must trust to my memory and theoretical knowledge of the face of the country till I should reach Geneva, and to that alone.

Between St. Germain and Scez, the mule-path descending the mountain runs into the narrow gully of the Reclus, and passes the stream at the foot of *La Roche Blanche*, a remarkable mass of white gypsum, the existence of which on this part of the mountain adds much additional weight to the hypothesis of Hannibal's passage having been effected over this portion of the chain.

I soon descended to the village where I was to pass the night; but when I entered the miserable, filthy cabaret, which had become, in the description of my hostess, an excellent inn, I made up my mind to a change of plan.

As I was yet fresh, and had two or three hours of daylight remaining, I determined to attempt to reach Chapui that night; as at the very worst I should have to lie upon hay in some *châlet* on the mountain, which was preferable to the suspicious kind of accommodation here offered me. I consequently got such intelligence from the master of the cabaret, as I fancied would carry me through, and resumed my pole.

After crossing the valley in which Scez lies, I entered a ravine running up for miles into the heart of the mountains to the north, very remarkable for the vast and bare precipices of naked rock between which it is inclosed. In about four hours I reached the little cluster of *châlets* that bears the name of Chapui. The last league and a half of this defile,—from a certain ruined chapel, with the marble font for holy water still adhering to the right side of the doorway, to the hamlet,—is one of the most marked scenes of that awful and mingled description of devastation and destruction so common amongst these high and towering mountains, caused by the triple agency of avalanches, the fall of rocks, and torrents. Perhaps of all these, though the two former are more magnificently awful, the latter is the most disastrous in its effects.

A water-course of sometimes a mile in breadth, which is, in the summer, only occupied by an inconsiderable rivulet not half-a-yard broad, becomes, in

the spring-time or after heavy rains, the scene of the most fearful deluge, rolling along rocks of vast size, and spreading in every direction stones and gravel and mud. In this manner, large tracts of some of the finest valleys of Switzerland are rendered desolate and incapable of cultivation.

In one of the *châlets* I was made welcome by an old woman, who said she could harbour me in a spare sleeping apartment. Into this I had to creep by a ladder and trap-door, and found it a sad dingy hole in the roof; but no matter, it was shelter. I supped upon some eggs; then secured my trap, and threw myself on a pallet in a corner for the night.

July 27th.—The gray of early morning was just stealing over the deep valley, when I stepped out from the low door-way of the *châlet* and followed the track leading on to the heights behind the hamlet. I had before me seven or eight hours' march, before I could reach Contamines, on the north side of the pass of the Bonhomme. I set off for this passage with that diffidence and caution which total ignorance of the ground, height, turnings, and windings, and only a general idea of the direction to be followed must occasion.

After three-quarters of an hour's climb I came to some *châlets*, where I got as much milk as I needed, but little or no information calculated to inspire confidence. The peasants were profuse with their warnings that I should not go here, or turn there, but go the right way; for which I felt, of course, very thankful.

When I approached the higher parts of the mountain, I found myself more and more at a loss, from

time to time; and saw, with some anxiety, that the atmosphere was filling rapidly with thick white mist, when, from the broken nature of the ground, I had the greatest difficulty in keeping any track.

At the same time that I foresaw the trouble they would occasion, I could not avoid pausing to admire the manner in which one white and shining mass of clouds after another dilated and grew, as it were, under my very eye. They at first rested among the rocky pinnacles, and on the slopes of the adjacent mountain, then rose into the air, and hung suspended over the deep valleys below me, till, increasing in number and volume, they gradually shrouded all inferior objects. I could then observe them slowly rising, till, the wind freshening, they came rolling and labouring up the mountain-side after me, and long before I gained the highest ridge, I was enveloped in impenetrable mist.

For still another hour did I, with many an anxious pause, turn my face towards the north, and persevere, in spite of all the perplexity produced by innumerable rain-ruts, sheep-tracks, and all those various accidents, which, aided by thick mist, add to the bewilderment of the wanderer. Nevertheless, so far, I endured but little additional fatigue from mistakes, as I found myself suddenly on a ridge where a pole, fixed in the rock, told me I had gained the highest point of the Col de Bonhomme*.

But now what was to be done? At this elevation the wind was very fresh, and the mist was hurried to and fro with rapidity, yet I could never distinguish the surface for many yards around. I followed

* Col de Bonhomme, 8030 feet above the sea.

some kind of track, over a wide drift of snow, but whether that of a mule or a number of sheep, I could not determine. This led me into a deep water-course, and there I lost it; and on no side could I distinguish the least continuation.

The whole head of the mountain, as far as I could distinguish, consisted of a bed of rough rock, exfoliated in every part by the action of the wind and weather, and strewed with large blocks. Amidst all this chaos it was impossible for me to discover a track.

To give a history of my wanderings on such a spot, and under such circumstances, now led higher and higher to the right by some flitting gleam or supposition, and now further down the mountain to the left, in pursuance of another idea equally fallacious, would afford no entertainment, even were it possible.

At the end of an hour, entirely passed in this fruitless exercise of wit and patience, I had to return to the place where the footmarks led to the water-course; for of the exact position of this I had taken care never to lose the recollection. After breathing awhile, I set off afresh from this point on a new speculation. The atmosphere had begun gradually to brighten, and a gleam of sunshine, to the north-west, gave me suddenly the glimpse of a valley far below me in that quarter. Though I indulged at first the idea of this being the direction with sufficient avidity, and pursued my course down the mountain towards it for about a quarter of an hour, yet I became convinced, as a glimpse of the position of the sun allowed me to determine the points of the compass with some exactness, that I was still in the wrong, and that any valley in that direction would carry me much too far to the westward to bring me

right. I therefore, however unwillingly, determined to turn once more about, and regain my old post near the head of the mountain.

This done, I waited for a further brightening, and, after some time, discovered, by narrowly watching the partial glimpses upon the country below, afforded by the shifting layers of mist, that there was another long valley to the north-east, and towards this I instantly descended. Shortly after, I imagined I could distinguish something like a deep track, in a snow-drift considerably to the right, and making towards it, found myself relieved from two hours' fatiguing anxiety, by striking into the regular mule-path.

By following this I was led gradually over the shoulder of the mountain. The mist began to dissipate, and by the time I had reached the brow of the great descent, the sun shone out warm and bright, and the summits of all the mountains in the vicinity were cloudless.

The mists now formed a turbulent sea of rolling vapour over all the country below me, while parts of the chain of Mont Blanc to the right, the long line of the mountains commanding the valley of the Arve before me, and various high snowy summits of the Savoy Alps to the left, rose high above their level into the blue sky.

The descent of the Bonhomme to the north is craggy and broken, but not dangerous.

In this higher region of the mountain, I became an object of curiosity to a small troop of the most beautiful milk-white goats I ever saw. They came down on my approach from a rocky pinnacle, and amused me by their tricks and tameness for several

long miles of my downward course; to be sure, I was rather incommoded with their good companionship, not only because when I halted for a moment to look around me, they were always pressing forward to lick my hand, and munge my pocket-handkerchief if they could get hold of the end; but because I did not wish to decoy them from their appointed pasture. However, they judged otherwise, as in spite of many a menace, a gentle shower of pebbles, torrents, and other impediments which nature helped me to interpose in the way of their further progress, they continued to follow me for two leagues, till, having passed Mont Jovet, I had an opportunity of leaving them in the care of a young Savoyard woman. There is something in the expression of countenance of the Savoyard, infinitely more prepossessing than in that of the Piedmontese. This was a good tempered free-spoken girl, knitting away as fast as her fingers could move, and tending her cows and goats on one of the alps near the last-mentioned spot. She came and seated herself on the same mass of rock, told me all I wished to know about my future route, and that better than a map could have done; said she would take care of the goats—shook hands, wished me a prosperous journey at parting, and then went on with her song and stocking-foot.

I walked forward over alternate plains and steep declivities till about eleven, when I was glad to arrive at the village of Contamines, and to obtain some refreshment.

Though the weather was fine and very hot, I did not feel tempted to trust its continuing so; I therefore concluded not to cross the Forclaz, and go to

Chamounix direct, but to proceed to Sallenché, and from thence, according as the season should be favourable or not, to the valley of Chamounix, or to Geneva on the morrow.

I was doomed to be unfortunate with regard to Mont Blanc, not a flake of whose snows could be discovered through the clouds enveloping it. I had been advised to take up my quarters at St. Martin, on the opposite side of the river from Sallenché, but I had become distrustful of the saints, and preferred the latter town, where I found no indifferent accommodation.

July 28th.—My report of the glorious valley of the Arve must be a short and melancholy one. Rain, and thick mists, cutting the mountains almost at their base, prevailed through the day; and, however unwillingly, I was obliged to relinquish Chamounix for the present. I cannot give any details of the scenery in my day's walk from Sallenché to Geneva, and my personal adventures were not of a more interesting character.

The whole line of route abounds in gins, traps, snickles, and nets, for the money of *messieurs les voyageurs* in general, and that of *milor Anglais* in particular. Here an inn, a blind fiddler, and twenty beggars; there an echo, a grotto, and twenty more, and so on throughout the whole day's journey. Among all these modes of extracting the *batzen* of the traveller, none amused me so much as the following. A mile or so beyond the Nant d'Arpenaz, I came suddenly upon a little grassy plateau in the midst of the underwood, among which I perceived a pole and board very gaily painted. Before I could

read the advertisement, I heard a voice close to me begin an adjuration in the following words—‘*Bon jour, mon cher monsieur, si vous êtes amateur des échos—*’ I turned, and saw a slight-made fellow posted between two pieces of wood painted red, and before him a small piece of cannon pointed towards me. An incident in the second chapter of *Gil Blas* flashed irresistibly strong upon my memory; such was the similarity between the scenes, the purpose, and the manner of attack upon the purse. However, the danger being less imminent, my alarm was proportionably less; though, after answering briefly, that I had neither the ears, time, nor money for echoes just at that moment, I had some idea that I should hear a piece of turf from his howitzer whizzing after me in despite.

At Contamines I made a brief halt, after nine hours’ continued march, and had unexpectedly to engage in a fierce debate with a Roman Catholic *curé* upon the marriage of priests. In this he was the assailant, though I flatter myself he had no other advantage in the argument. We squabbled a good hour, without, as might be expected, either party giving signs of conversion, and then parted pretty good friends. Eight or nine miles’ further advance brought me once more over the Swiss boundary in the neighbourhood of Geneva; and few can imagine the satisfaction I experienced in shaking from my shoes the dust of the dominions of his majesty of Sardinia.

CHAPTER IX.

“ How sweet were leisure, could it yield no more
Than midst that wave-washed church-yard to recline,
From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine;
Or there to pause, and mark the summits hoar
Of distant moonlit mountains faintly shine;
Sooth'd by the unseen river's gentle roar. ”

It would be difficult to describe that species of discomfort which is inseparably connected with the actions and enjoyments of the traveller, in a country where the movements are questionable, and may be inquired into by every soi-disant officer with whom he meets. I am willing to admit that my method of travelling was one that laid me open to these petty vexations, and that circumstances aggravated them; yet every one who knows the pleasures of uncontrolled and unquestioned personal freedom, will understand and enter into the satisfaction I experienced on breathing once more the atmosphere of a free country, where there was no spy upon the actions, and no spell upon the enjoyment.

When I find myself in the track of thousands equally observant, I have not the same desire, nor indeed the same excuse, for obtruding my observations upon the patience of the reader. I shall therefore quit Geneva, pass rapidly over the whole surface of the magnificent lake, at whose lower extremity that ancient city is situated, and transport

myself to the little village of Montreux, the spire of whose gothic church peeps over the foliage, on the mountain-side above the high road from Clarens to Chillon.

I here found, during the course of a long and glowing summer's evening, a return of that quiet and tranquillity of mind which had been somewhat impaired during the varied exertions and adventures of the preceding ten or twelve days' march, and which the exterior bustle and agitation of a large town had prevented my recovering at Geneva.

There are certain scenes eminently calculated to produce or to nurse this species of calm; and it is by God's mercy that we are so constituted, that the mute eloquence of external objects has such influence over our spirits.

A village church-yard! there is peace in the very sound. A retired and silent village church-yard, with its ranks of simple unadorned memorials to the dead; a place where the mourner may weep in secret; where the burdened may pray for relief; where the thoughtless may feel himself incited to think; where the agitated spirit may become calm; and where the wanderer may retire from the hurry and distraction produced in the mind by the rapid changes of situation and circumstance, and the novel forms of men and things, to a scene where there is no novelty; and where all speaks a language known to every heart, in whatever land its ideas and affections may have been nurtured.

The dead are of no nation. However strong and deep the lines of distinction which separate men while on the surface of the earth, all are erased for ever, as soon as they are committed to the dust;

where all partake of the same corruption, and await the same summons, whatever their country or their parentage, or however far separated the periods of their earthly existence. To a traveller, therefore, a church-yard may be allowed to have a peculiar charm ; and, on entering the little enclosure set apart for the repose of the dead, particularly in a foreign country where there exists the same unobtrusive simplicity in the form of sepulture with our own, he may well feel as though he were no longer in a strange land.

What place so fitting as this to open the heart, to bow the reins, and to turn to God ; where the scene around would invite one to number the few brief days that compose the past, and to glance towards the immeasurable and incomprehensible future?

When seated on the low wall that runs round the edge of the rocky knoll upon which the church of Montreux is perched high upon the mountain-side, my thoughts passed rapidly over the events and scenes of the journey which might now be considered as nearly terminated ; and I may surely say I felt both thankful and humbled.

Though we may believe, that the merciful providence of God is ever watchful over his creatures, during every period of their existence, yet there are certain situations in which the interference of that providence becomes more cognizable, and more strikingly apparent. And when, after the fever of spirit and body produced by constant violent exertion had passed away, I recalled in solitude and silence the many moments during the preceding days, when I knew I was risking life and limb, not to speak of hidden dangers of which I was unconscious, I felt

self-accusation, and inclined to ask why the providence of God had followed me even to that moment; and why I had been preserved. Truly, God loves us better than we love ourselves.

The outlines of the vast and magnificent scene displayed around the head of the lake of Geneva are easy to describe; but no pen and no pencil can embody and pourtray the beauty and delicious colouring of the picture, as the hand of God has painted it.

Vevay, Clarens, and Chillon, are names which, among thousands in the surrounding nations, as well as our own, have become inseparably linked with the idea of beauty: the mere mention of them seems to bring sunshine upon the memory.

I watched the sun sink slowly behind the Jura; the shadows of twilight spread gradually over the water, and deepen in the recesses of the mountains at the head of the lake; and when, still later, the stars had begun to glimmer upon the calm surface, and I turned to descend into the village, I could still descry the snows of the Dent du Midi gleaming aloft in the twilight, and tinged with the lingering hues of departed day.

The following morning the sun rose bright and clear upon the same magnificent scene; and pursuing my homeward route across the ridge of the Pass de Jaman, in the chain behind Montreux, I descended into the vale of Gruyères. The fever, of which I had experienced the first attack upon the Little St. Bernard, returned upon me the day after quitting Montreux, and rendered my subsequent advance through the Simmenthal and Berne, where I was obliged to go upon business, a wearisome pilgrimage, and a continual struggle between a body in

pain, and a spirit raised by the scenes around above its ordinary strength.

Ten days' halt in the neighbourhood of Berne, and a fortnight's visit to Neuchâtel occupied the greater part of the month of August. The first days of September I returned to my head-quarters in the Simmenthal, to await settled weather before I bent my course towards the east of Switzerland, the part I had fixed upon for the scene of my autumnal tour.

I must now consider Erlenbach, and its vicinity, tolerably well known to my reader, and therefore say less about it than I otherwise should.

The weather had been stormy, and each heavy shower left the head of the Niesen and his neighbours whitened with snow*. However, the very first fine day I determined to ascend the Stockhorn before the season should be too far advanced; and I may be allowed to add a few pages to those already occupied with a sketch of this remarkable mountain.

Accordingly, I took advantage of a fine sun-rise (September 9th), and with this view, left the parsonage early, accompanied by Stumah, who seemed to consider himself in duty bound to be my companion as long as I confined my rambles to a given number of hours, and a reasonable circuit round his

* For the sake of giving an idea, however rude, of the natural phenomena of the Alps, I have attempted to add a scale, as far as my observation has extended, of the superficial appearances of the different heights.

Above 10,000 feet, which is commonly considered the limit of eternal snow, rise the summits of the high central chain of primitive mountains, presenting in general very sharp and precipitous outlines, and covered with the accumulated burden of centuries, except in parts where the rocks are too perpendicular for the snow to settle.

home ; but he had a wonderful knack of guessing when my preparations boded a longer departure, and of sneaking out of the way to avoid taking leave.

The pathway leading up the mountain to this singular rock I have described elsewhere. During the first hour's climb towards the high ridge, on the opposite side of which the Stockensee lies, I found the heat excessive, though, for a considerable portion of this time, the road winds through the pine forests.

All objects had begun to wear an autumnal air. The mould and turf interspersed among the trees, damp and covered with forest plants all going fast to decay—and the air, perfumed with the odour of

From these descend the glaciers, commonly so called, from various heights to an average level of about 2,800 or 3,000 feet above the sea.

Feet above the sea.

10,000	Snow never melts.
9,000	Patches of snow often remaining unmelted for years.
8,500 } 8,000 }	Bare rock.
7,500 } 7,000 }	Rocks and patches of pasture.
6,500	Much rock ; highest pine forests ; scattered pastures and chalets.
5,500	Rich pastures during the height of summer ; chalets.
5,000	Belt of pine forests.—To this level the country is often covered with snow from storms in the height of summer,
4,000	Pastures, and innumerable chalets.
3,000	To this level the glaciers mostly descend from the flanks of the central chain of the Alps, to the heads of the valleys.
2,500	Many mineral springs.
2,000	Pines, but few forest trees : broken country.
1,500	Many pines, pastures, and forest trees.
1,000	Level of the hamlets, lakes, and vineyards, corn-lands, villages, &c.

dead and dying foliage, gave tokens of the decline of the year. In this month, however, one plant is in its greatest beauty. The *clematis*, having gained the highest twigs of the shrubs and young trees to which it is indebted for support, throws itself over, and descends in luxuriant strings of bright green foliage, sometimes to the very ground, fully deserving its old fashioned English name, the *traveller's joy*, from the skreen afforded by its gracefully twisted branches.

While passing through the forests, I could not avoid regretting, for the hundredth time, the wanton waste of timber which they exhibit; the peasant cutting all the pines and larch at the height of three feet from the ground, to avoid the trouble of stooping, instead of baring the roots and hewing as low as possible. The forest is studded with stumps in every state of decay.

When I reached the higher pastures, I found the air very fresh and even cold. Some few dozen cattle were still lingering upon this part of the mountain, but the vachers told me they must retreat lower down in a few days.

The bells attached to the necks of the cattle when grazing answer more than one purpose, particularly on the higher ranges of pastures. They are of many different forms and sizes, from the diminutive tinkling ornament of the pet-goat, to the apparently ponderous and deep-toned appendage of the leader of the herd.

The confusion of sounds, produced by the constant movement of these, in a herd of sixty or a hundred head of cattle, is more singular than agreeable, if their clashing and irregular tones are chiming un-



THE STOCKHORN.

ceasingly in the vicinity of the chalet where you are seeking repose at night. And yet this is the only situation where this rude concert did not convey to my mind a sensation of indescribable delight.

When raised high above the inhabited world on the stupendous crag, how sweetly the chimes of the grazing herds come sounding from the alps below. How cheerfully their sonorous and varied peal comes floating over the wide pastures, or along the alpine valley at even-tide, when the cattle instinctively begin to move towards the chalets to be milked; or, while leaving the same neighbourhood at early morning, they wind in long irregular lines up the mountain to their destined day's pasturage.

When hours have passed over the head of the solitary traveller, while struggling with the difficulty of his way, in those gray and mazy solitudes which lie at the base of the higher mountains, faint in body with the heat of a summer's noon, and bewildered in spirit by many a heavy and questionable step; it is not easy to conceive the thrill of pleasure which passes through the frame when the faint echo of the herd-bells strikes upon the ear.

But the custom of decorating the cattle in this manner must not be supposed to be merely intended to give pleasure to the eye and the ear, however harmless that sole purpose might appear.

On the immense and elevated pastures occupying the heads of the secondary mountains, and the flanks and off-sets from the main chain, where it is usual for the herds to pass the summer, (ascending, according to the season, in May or June, and returning into the valleys about October), the ground is often very uneven, interspersed with rocks, and bor-

dered by vast precipices. In these regions, it will not be supposed possible for a vacher to confine ninety or a hundred cows, each choosing her own pasture, and going her own way, within a circle of any moderate circumference; much less in sight of the châlet where he and his people are occupied in carrying on the operations of their dairy; or without considerable labour to himself and his four-footed assistants, to collect the cattle night and morning for the purpose of milking.

In many herds, it is true, the cows are so well-trained that little or no trouble is experienced in bringing them into the neighbourhood of the châlets at the accustomed hour, the sound of the alp-horn being quite sufficient to make them bestir themselves and instantly to return, in many instances at a hand gallop. Even without this signal, instinct will bring the greater proportion of the herd home at the proper hour. But this cannot always be expected to be the case with every individual in a large herd, and yet accidents rarely happen, because the vacher or his dogs have always a clue in the bell, in their search after any straying animal, as the slightest tinkle of this is heard to an unusual distance in these still and elevated regions. Yet this is not all. The traveller may become convinced, by his own observation, of the truth of what is generally upheld amongst the Swiss peasantry, that the bell is considered by the animal as a mark of distinction and approval of good behaviour, and the deprivation of this species of ornament as a punishment and sign of displeasure. The discipline in the little monarchy, of which the vacher is the undisputed lord and master, tends in every way to inculcate this; and experience has mul-

tiplied proofs that it has taken effect in an extraordinary degree.

The cow, whose superior beauty, sagacity, or good conduct seems to designate her for leader, is on gala-days distinguished by the largest and finest-toned bell and the bravest ornamented collar; and so down through all the gradations of good, to the small appendage that marks the indifferently good or clever animal, and the total absence of ornament and distinction which points out the self-willed or vicious.

If any animal has been guilty of straying, unseemly behaviour, breach of discipline, or any vicious trick, the displeasure of the vacher is not testified by blows, but by the temporary deprivation of her bell; and this seldom fails to reduce her to order, and prevent a repetition of the offence. It is only necessary to see the cow on a gala-day, with her badge of distinction strapped round her neck, and then deprived of it for one or another reason, to be convinced that this is true; now gay, good-humoured, and frolicsome—and then sulky and gloomy. I have never noticed that the *moonies*, or bulls, wore any thing of the kind: from which I have inferred, that the effect on the animal may be attributed to the universal diffusion of the harmless quality called female vanity through the better half of the animal creation, whether biped or quadruped.

One anecdote in illustration.—It is well known, that the day when the vachers leave their winter quarters in the villages and set out to conduct their herds to the high pastures, is considered a day of rejoicing and festivity. The master and his valets are dressed out in their holiday clothes, and bedi-

zened with ribbons and nosegays ; the good wife and her children appear in their best bib and tucker ; the cattle are all well cleaned, and the largest sized bells, seldom used on any but like solemn occasions, on account of their weight, distributed to the most worthy. The leaders, in addition, are decorated with garlands, and many bear between their horns some light utensil belonging to the dairy, while a car follows with the heavier materials.

The preparations being concluded, the leaders set forward, generally preceded by one of the cowherds ; the *ranz de vache* is struck up, and mingles with the shouts and good wishes of the neighbours for a fortunate and fruitful summer. As the whole body gets in motion, the jarring sound of the bells soon fills up all intervals, and the cavalcade, defiling through the village, disappears among the inequalities of the ground at the foot of the mountains.

On one of these occasions, it was judged proper to omit the decoration of the great bell in the toilet of a fine cow, one of the leaders in a large herd which was upon the point of quitting a village at the foot of the Alps, for the purposes just alluded to, on account of her having calved but a few days before, and under the idea that she would perhaps be injured by the additional fatigue it might occasion. At the moment when the herd began its journey, she was nevertheless turned out of the stall to take her place ; but, after proceeding a few paces, she began to shew signs of great uneasiness, and at length replied to the attempts made to coax her forward, by lying down on her side, as though in a fainting fit.

A consultation was immediately held, and various were the opinions broached, as to the cause of her

sudden indisposition. They would have lodged her again in the stable, would she have moved. In this dilemma, an old experienced vacher came up, and seeing how the case stood, coolly went into the house, and brought out the bell and collar, which the animal no sooner felt about her neck, than up she got, shook herself, raised and crooked her tail over her haunches in token of complete satisfaction, went off prancing, kicking, and curvetting, with every appearance of health and gaiety, and, taking her place in the van, was, from that moment, as well as ever.

The summit of the Stockhorn was attained about noon, without particular adventure, except that, precisely at the critical passage over the three ridges, I was surprised, somewhat at disadvantage, by a violent tornado, which forced me, more than once, to forsake the erect and godlike position of my species, and scramble in all humility, *à quatre pattes* after my four-footed friend.

The principal features of the view from this noble rock, both towards the Oberland and the Jura, have been for the greater part enumerated in the sketch given at a former page of the panorama from the opposite summit of the Niesen; and though the idea I have attempted to give of it should be very imperfect and very unworthy, I feel unable to add to it.

Baron Humboldt has expressed (when among like scenes in another hemisphere) a sentiment to this effect: "That it is very difficult to paint those sensations, which act with so much the more force, as they have something undefined produced by the immensity of the space, as well as the greatness, the novelty, and the multitude of the objects which are

displayed before us." I cannot hope to communicate to any other bosom, by the mere details of description, the glowing sensations excited by the contemplation of scenes like these.

It is possible to give the outlines ; to throw the sunshine over them ; to separate the broader masses of light and shade ; to picture forth the wide expanse of smiling country, stretched like a map beneath, farther and farther to the dim horizon ; the glistening river and white-walled town, the blue lakes embosomed in hills, and piled-up mountains overtopped by the vast glaciers:—but to describe the height, the depth, and space of the vast picture, to paint the blending of innumerable colours and of lights and shadows ; to embody in words the spirit and the feeling that rest upon the whole, and give it its harmony and beauty,—*that* neither the tongue, the pen, nor the pencil, can do adequately.

After some time spent in enthusiastic admiration of the scene around me, I stretched myself on the short grassy turf which here and there occupies a few yards among the rocks at the brink of the precipice, and for an hour indulged in that half-dreaming, half-waking state of repose which is one of the greatest luxuries I am acquainted with, under such circumstances.

In attempting to explain, I fear I may be unintelligible to those who have not made experience that it is one thing to doze and dream common-places in an arm-chair, after dinner, by a snug fire-side, and a very different one to take your siesta on the summit of lofty mountains, fanned by the gale which sighs around them, and breathing freely the pure atmosphere.

With what a voluptuous sense of tranquillity you feel slumber stealing over you, withdrawing the blue sky from your gaze, and the consciousness of your position from your senses. The wind sighing among the pine forests below, or whistling shrilly for a moment among the shivered crags around, or bearing to your ear the chime of the bells from the pastures; the short scream of the falcon wheeling his flight near the summit, or some sudden and unusual sound rising up from the 'hoar profound;'—these may bring you to your consciousness for the moment; your eye fixes upon the deep blue sky, a thought of where you are steals over your brain, and is as quickly obliterated.

I am sorry that I can give no particular information, from personal adventure, of that singular race of people, called by the mountaineers *Berggeister* (spirits of the mountain), corresponding to the dwarf of the old German legends. They form a very considerable item in the trembling belief of the inhabitants of these valleys, where they have the poetical appellation of *Nachtvölkli* (little people of the night). And we may yet speak with grandmothers who remember perfectly, and most positively record, the visits of these urchins, on long autumnal evenings, in the farm-houses of their parents, and their goodnatured offers of assistance in any work which happened to be going on.

Alas! alas! we live in a sad matter-of-fact age, when incredulity is much more fashionable than that amiable and unhesitating credence in matters like these, which distinguished the olden time. Of all the many and diverse classes of beings, corporeal and incorporeal, which in times gone by seemed to

have formed the link between the visible and invisible world, and administered, by their casual presence, to the terrors, fancy, and amusement of old and young for so many centuries, there is scarcely a single one sufficiently bold and unblushing to make his appearance in the present age of general unbelief. Alas for Robin Goodfellow! he churns cream for none of the present race of gainsaying housewives. The fairy has left the green sward of our summers, though both the moon-beams and the dew fall upon it as they ever did. The brownie and the pixie have deserted the moor, and the kelpie the ford. No one now sees any thing of either Guy Trash or Gilpin Horner; and even the place of good Friar Rush, whom every child was accustomed to see and to speak of, not many generations back, is usurped in our times by what the present enlightened race of children call *Ignis Fatuus*!

My descent was deferred till towards evening. I then took a new line of route in the direction of the Stockenfluh and the second lake, and returned through the forests and pastures to Erlenbach.

A great annual horse and cattle fair, a few days after, converted our retired village and its environs, as well as the roads leading to it, from Thun and the Ober-Simmenthal, into a scene of temporary uproar and bustle. The proposed nuptials of David the schoolmaster, which were announced about the same time, set the tongues of all the parish agog: so that, what between the conversation of the peasants who were interested in the purchase or disposal of cattle, and the continual palaver held by select bodies of their wives and daughters in every corner of the

village, to decide upon the expediency of the match in question, the character of my favourite retirement seemed greatly changed.

Two or three days set the first-mentioned point of discussion at rest, by the complete disappearance of the herds of cattle and strings of horses which had occasioned it. The latter continued still a very engrossing subject of interest, and the females kept the ball flying with great perseverance for a considerable time longer. I found, after some time, that the debate, which had at first confined itself solely to the fitness and propriety of the match in question between David and Rozie-käteli, had taken a rather different and more serious turn; and the question now was, whether it was likely to take place at all. I was sorry to understand there was some reason for the entertainment of a suspicion of this kind, as David and myself had always been very civil to each other, and I had every reason to wish him well.

A mountain-summit called the Thurnen*, with the Pfaffen adjoining, situated on the south side of the valley, became the object of a solitary and amusing excursion on the 13th. I should not think it worth while to occupy a page with any observations upon this mountain, had it only its elevation or common features to recommend it. As far as the point of view which it affords is concerned, it is, from its position as well as its height, necessarily much inferior to the Stockhorn in interest. Yet in its geological structure it is infinitely more curious than even that remarkable rock, or any other mountain which has come under my observation among

* The Thurnen, 6,900 feet above the sea.

the Alps, where the absence of volcanic phenomena is generally supposed.

After passing the Simmen a little higher up than the village, I kept to the bed of a mountain torrent that rushes down from a hollow in the Pfaffen for about an hour and a half, and climbed on to the Rinder-Alp, the route described in a former part of these sketches. The whole ascent, and particularly the Rinder-alp which crowns it, affords magnificent views of the Simmenthal, the two chains of the Stockhern and Niesen, and, in the distance, the blue lake of Thun, and the range of the Faulhorn behind. The wide range of pastures known by the name of the Rinder-alp is one of the finest I am acquainted with, being of great extent, and almost entirely free from stone. From this I mounted gradually, leaving the round summit of this mountain a little to the right, and making directly for the ridge connecting it with the Thurnen.

Owing to the cattle and the lateness of the season, the magnificent carpet, which in the earlier months of the summer covers all these high pastures, had entirely disappeared. The exquisite butterflies which then flutter in great numbers among the flowers had also taken leave, and their place was usurped by myriads of grasshoppers, much to the perplexity and amusement of Stumah, who was kept busy on the hunt for miles together.

When I had gained the ridge, an unusual scene presented itself. I stood upon the brink of an amphitheatre of rocks, forming the wall of a precipice of several hundred feet, which increases gradually in height as the ridge ascends to the south west towards the summit of the Thurnen.

The interior of the vast cavity at your feet is co-

vered with a pine forest of the most sombre foliage. Over this, deeper and deeper, the eye catches glimpses of the lower gradations of the mountain, and of the valley of the Simmen; while before the spectator rise the broken and towering summits which form the advance range of the Stockhorn chain.

But what most engages the attention is the wall of rocks upon which you stand. Immense masses of lime-stone, whose substance strongly indicates the action of fire, with streaks of blue, violet, red, and yellow, rise up in the most grotesque and singular forms from the sides of the precipice. The strata into which they were originally divided are broken, bent, and welded together in the most singular manner, as if they had been kneaded and worked into their present form while in a state of fusion. From the bosom of the abyss isolated masses shoot up like needles almost to a level with the brink of the precipice, so high and pointed that in certain positions it is difficult to conceive that they are unattached to the further side of the amphitheatre, from which they are in reality many hundred feet distant.

I saw them for a few minutes to the greatest possible advantage, the flying clouds throwing their shade upon the distant rocks, while a bright sun-beam illuminated these isolated needles in the interior of the cavity. My progress upon the ridge was very slow, as every footstep brought fresh points in view, or changed the position of those already seen. The Creux du Vent, in the country of Neuchâtel, is a cavity upon a still larger scale, but has none of the singular volcanic appearances which characterize this.

The swift advance of autumn reminded me that I should not delay my departure for the prosecution of my rambles longer than needful. I therefore took advantage of an early opportunity to commence my tour towards the Lake of Constance.

To Erlenbach, its quiet parsonage, and the social and tranquil enjoyment which always awaited me there, I proposed to return once more before I laid down my Alpenstock and retreated for the winter to Neuchâtel; as soon as continued motion, solitude, and spare commons, had rendered repose and society a welcome blessing.

September 18th.—A seat in the post-boat from the town of Thun to Interlaken and the Oberland conveyed me the whole length of the beautiful lake of Thun, after three hours' row to Neuhaus, the little port at the upper extremity. As I had a visit to make at Interlaken, I determined to remain the rest of the day at Unterseen. In the course of the afternoon I strolled forth, and after a few minutes' walk reached Interlaken. The walnut is here in all its glory. The cottages, and trees, and meadows, which are intermingled in the narrow slip of land between the lakes of Thun and Brienz, form a most enchanting foreground to the noble mountain scenery which surrounds them.

Passing through the village of Interlaken, I crossed the Aar a second time, and took a shady lane leading by the lake and tower of Goldswyl to the village and church of Ringgenberg, on the rocky shore of the lake of Brienz. The church is remarkably picturesque; in proof of which it is only neces-

sary to peep into the portfolio of every traveller who bears a crayon or pencil. It is situated upon a rocky projection of the shore, close to the dilapidated tower of the ancient castle of Ringgenberg, now feathered over with trees and bushes. Two very picturesque flights of steps wind round either side of the rock to the two entrances. The view on the lake comprises the whole length.

Though the shortening days at this season of the year occasion inconvenience to the traveller, yet they are not without their advantages, as the length of a day's march is more limited, and the time for memorandum-taking less brief and hurried. There is no proportion, during the months of June and July, between the time that the traveller is tempted to spend in motion and observation, and the hours left for recording and arranging his gleanings.

September 19th.—‘Ho, ho!’ muttered I, as soon as I found myself delivered from the *adieux* and fair speeches of mine hostess, and in motion towards the bridge of Unterseen; ‘I have been very fairly entertained with bed and board, and plenty of curtsies and polite speeches to boot; but I think I have paid a very unfair and shameless price for these good things.’ In short, I set out in high dudgeon, and with the same feeling of contempt and righteous anger which have glowed in the breast of many an Englishman, when exposed to the exorbitant charges and open plundering of the Swiss *aubergistes*. And this observation may give me the opportunity of making a few remarks on one or two subjects relating to the people of this country, and their connection with the myriads of travellers who have

ascended hither in increasing numbers, year by year, since the peace of 1815.

It cannot be denied, that the character of the majority of the Swiss peasantry, whose habitations are unfortunately in the neighbourhood of the main routes of travellers, or of the particular points of interest to which they lead, is most contemptible; that in such parts it is not only vain to expect to find those simple and guileless manners which in time past were associated with the name of the inhabitants of these mountains, but that even common morality is out of the question. There is a disposition in the majority of those who have been at all exposed to temptation, to take advantage of the ignorance of travellers, to make the most exorbitant demands, and to go to the greatest possible length in the system of extortion and deception. Even in those parts of the country, where the open flagrancy of the cases brought before them has excited the attention and provoked the surveillance of the magistrates, and where, in consequence, a kind of just price has been set upon various articles; opportunities are greedily seized upon to turn a dishonest penny, when it can be done without serious risk.

This the writer knows to be unquestionably the fact. Yet he must candidly add, what he also knows from observation, that the absurd conduct and unreasonable folly of travellers have strengthened the spring of this dishonest propensity in a very great degree: and while many a *just* complaint has been made against the extortion of those with whom the traveller must come in contact, many an *unreasonable* accusation also has been preferred under cir-

cumstances which would not allow the plaintiff to make his case good. An individual who is satisfied, while travelling in a country like this, to identify himself as much as possible with the people among whom he is thrown; who is contented with the general style of living, with the produce of the country, and more especially with the customary hours of eating and sleeping, has certainly reason to complain, if the mere circumstance of his being a stranger is deemed sufficient apology for making him the object of unprincipled spoliation and imposition.

But if the travellers be of another mind and order; if they pass through the country, as hundreds do, with their eyes shut to the style and manners of the people and difference of their habits from our own, and intent upon keeping up their usual style of corporeal indulgence as much as possible, such have not the same reason in their complaints. This is a lesson which many have had to learn, by the refusal of the magistrate to interfere in the quarrel, or by having a verdict given against them.

I have seen a party of English arrive at a mountain cabaret at nightfall, when the host and his family would, in the usual course of things, have been thinking of their beds; they order dinner, and insist upon having flesh, fish or fowl, foreign wines and liqueurs, just as though they were at the Star and Garter at Richmond; abuse the master and the domestics, dine at eight or nine, and sit over their cheer till past midnight. Mine host can put up with a good deal of extra trouble, with no small quantity of abuse, and will stay up all night with considerable temper, because he knows he can make them pay for it in hard money.

The next morning, as might be anticipated, he hands in a bill of nearly as many dollars as they had expected francs, without doubt exorbitant and overcharged, but at any rate there are plausible excuses for this exorbitancy.

The host will shrug his shoulders, in answer to their ill-expressed and angry expostulation, and merely say, that the gentleman must not expect to have articles which, however plentiful in towns, are luxuries on the mountains, without paying well for them.

The worst is, that little by little the show of justice that there once existed, and the distinction which was made between the individual who gave no trouble and was contented with what entertainment was easily provided, and those last described, is fast waning away; and to be a foreigner is sufficient to excite the plundering propensities of mine host and his coadjutors. He has frequently a regular system to pursue, according as the visitor announced is an Englishman, a Frenchman, or a German. The latter obtains the most grace in his eyes, and pays perhaps only ten or twenty per cent.; the Frenchman must expocket something more in consideration of his polish and politeness, and the old grudge borne him for past events; and the poor Englishman may esteem himself very happy, if, after partaking of the same fare, he finds himself desired to lay down a sum which only excites his surprise and keeps him on the grumble for the next three miles, and does not at once make him fly into a passion, and get a prejudice for life against every thing Swiss,

And it is not only those parts of the country through which the great stream of travellers sets, that have by this means become degraded; the fame

of these doings has gone abroad throughout the greater part of the whole community, and very few are the retired corners where you do not detect more or less of this dishonourable bent in the lower orders, if any way exposed to temptation.

It were to be wished that it was in this point alone that the moral character of the common people is debased. It will not be a matter of wonder that the present Swiss peasantry as a nation cannot longer be supposed to be the simple, virtuous, patriarchal race that their forefathers were. It is evident, from the perusal of their history, that the deterioration had been steady and gradual for some time previous to the close of the last century; and that nothing contributed more to it, than that system of foreign military service which, it would appear, had become necessary to the existence of the community.

Then the overpowering deluge of the French Revolution swept over the Jura, and gave accelerated impulse to the downward current of moral feeling in every rank of society in this unhappy country.

What evil influence this had at the time upon the principles of the people in general, as well as the virtue of families and individuals, it would now be a difficult and ungrateful task to decide. Much of that evil may at this time be supposed to have been already obviated; yet now that the waters of that fearful political phenomenon have retired, we may still see left behind the scum and the mud with which their polluted stream was heavily charged.

The peculiar customs of the mountain districts had from time immemorial favoured certain irregularities in the intercourse of the sexes, which only the general

simplicity of a patriarchal state could have kept within the intended restraint, or given a semblance of propriety to. I allude to the nocturnal visit of the betrothed to his mistress. It is easy to conceive, that whenever a laxer state of moral feeling should be introduced, a custom like this (under circumstances even the most favourable a questionable and hazardous one) would stand ready, like an open door, for the inlet of immorality. And such has not failed to be the case, aided as it was afterwards by the agitation of the times, and the rapid spread of revolutionary and irreligious principles. Little can now be said for the state of morality connected with this subject in the peasantry in general. And, as for the beaten road and path generally resorted to by travellers, the less that is said the better.

‘I have not been in the Oberland for years,’ is an expression I have heard time after time from worthy natives, and the reason is perfectly comprehensible. A true lover of his country may well grieve over the dishonour and the loss of moral feeling in Switzerland, and avoid going where he must be constantly reminded of its downfall.

But I must proceed on my day’s journey, and, in so doing, return again to those solitary wandering habits which have been termed by some ‘*les goûts d’ours*.’

The deep gloom of the early morning, combined with a hurricane of wind which had risen suddenly and raged for several hours during the night, tended to make the prospect of fine weather more a matter of hope than expectation.

However, I was prepared to take what might fall

to my lot; and, following the same direction as on the foregoing afternoon, I left the village of Ringgenberg to the right, and then proceeded along a lane on the skirts of the lake of Brienz, leading up and down, as it passed over the broken country at the foot of the picturesque range to the left, now through a copse of brushwood, or a portion of the forest; and then under the shade of the impending scar, or over the broad and stony bed of a winter torrent. Numbers of noble walnut-trees clothe the lowest declivities of the mountain towards the lake, and the hamlets through which the road passes abound with beautiful specimens of the rural architecture of the country, distinguished by their wide-spreading roofs and richly-carved fronts.

In the first portion of my walk I had to content myself with the scenery in my immediate neighbourhood, the mist hanging unusually low on the mountains, and in many parts descending to the water's edge. About eight o'clock, however, there were some slight prognostics of a dispersion, and the wind soon after going round to the east, and freshening, one layer after another began to put itself in motion, and gradually to dissipate.

There is something uncommonly beautiful in the dispersion of such an autumnal fog. The astonishing illusion which it favours, as to the heights and distances of objects half-seen through its transparent folds, or towering above them for an instant, and its gradual removal, as though by enchantment, till nothing remains but one long narrow illuminated line, stretching horizontally mid-way up the mountains, for miles together, which, growing fainter and

fainter, at last melts insensibly into the blue atmosphere,—never cease to excite wonder.

Brienzen, near the head of the lake of that name, is exquisitely situated, commanding a view of the whole length from the entrance of the Aar to the tower of Goldswyl at the lower extremity. The mountains on both sides are very commanding.

A long, varied ascent of six or seven miles brought me early in the afternoon to the summit of the Brünig, separating the valley of Oberhasli from the smallest of the four Forest cantons, Unterwalden. I was here upon known ground.

At the little chapel upon the brink of the precipitous descent above Lungern, on the Unterwalden side, I overtook a large party of Vallaisans, going on pilgrimage either to the shrine of Engelberg, in the neighbouring mountains, or to that of Einsiedeln, in the Canton of Schwytz. From this point, the vale, village, and lake of Lungern, embosomed in mountains, forms one of the most delicious scenes in Switzerland. The waters of the lake are of an intensity of blue I never saw surpassed even at sea ; and are stated to be of an extraordinary depth.

The different style of building in the canton you have left, from that of Unterwalden, strikes the eye instantly on entering the village. The houses are taller in proportion to their length and breadth, and the roofs considerably narrower, and the ridge forms a more acute angle. A still more striking feature are the narrow slips of roofing over the line of windows in each story. The lattices are filled, for the most part, with small round or hexangular panes, and are fewer in number than in the Berne cottages.

Then, the fronts are decorated with quite a different style of carving and painting. The vine would seem more plentiful here than in the Canton of Berne, and appears to great advantage upon the dark coloured pine-wood of which the cottages in this canton are commonly built.

The descent from the vale of Lungern to the valley of Sarnen is over a precipitous break in the country, called the Kaiserstuhl; here the carriage-road commences, so that there was even less chance of adventure than in the earlier part of the route. I arrived early in the evening at Sachslen, and took up my quarters in my former inn near the church.

September 20th.—I quitted the village about six in the morning with gray weather, as on the preceding day, and leaving the town of Sarnen to the left, took the road to Stanz. About nine o'clock, the sun broke out with great splendour.

Stanz is situated near the entrance of the Engelbergthal, or valley of the Aa, at the foot of a high and picturesque mountain forming the left side of the valley. Both in point of situation and historical interest, it is one of the most remarkable towns of this quarter of Switzerland. To both NW and NE. appear ramifications of the Lake of the Four Cantons: the first is that towards Stanzstad and the Alpachersee, backed by the Pilatus; and the latter a portion of the principal division of the lake, from Buochs to Brunnen.

Towards the last-mentioned I continued my route through a fertile and beautiful country, and, about eight miles below Stanz, reached the little port of Bekenried.

Here I procured a boat with three rowers, to take me two leagues up the lake to Brunnen. I should have preferred a smaller vessel, for every reason, but the prevalence of a wind from the south called here the *Fön*, or the *Italian wind*, rendered the passage of such a light vessel dangerous.

The *Fön* is often the cause of accidents from the sudden and violent gusts with which it is accompanied. It is a local wind, acting from the Alps northward, much as the *Joran* does on the southern edge of the Jura, though depending upon other causes, which I do not understand.

It is a luxury to be surrounded by such scenes! the lofty impending mountains, with their mingling maze of precipices and forest, the cheerful white-walled village chequering the margin of the lake with its reflected colours, the blue waters fading further and further into the vista of the mountains, till the eye can scarcely distinguish the line where they ripple against the precipice; the white chapel half embosomed in trees;—and these in a land which has been freedom's favoured sanctuary, and surely in the day of her distress will become so again; where Winkelried has breathed, where the chapel of Tell still gems the water edge, the Field of Rütli still hangs like a watch tower among the forests; and the homes of Stauffacher, and Fürst, of the Redings and Attinghausen, and their brethren, still look down upon the waters of the lake.

When our boat had advanced about half its little voyage, the sky began to darken more and more, particularly in the direction of the Pilatus, whose precipitous and distant cliffs might be seen, on

glancing back, to support high masses of lead-coloured cloud, traversed by white strings of floating mist.

It is singular that almost all the thunder-storms rising in this part of the country are observed to brew on this mountain, a circumstance that has conspired with the name to render it an object of unpleasant respect among the inhabitants of the surrounding cantons.

The country people have believed, whether they believe it now or not, that beside the unhappy spirit of Pontius Pilate, whom vague tradition has contrived to bring into this country, and to drown in one of the black lakes on this mountain, the higher portions to be frequented by a malignant race of demons. Let that be as it may, I was myself witness to the gradual rise of a storm among its lakes and rocks on this occasion: loud thunderclaps began to issue from the mountain, and echo from the Alps of Schwytz and Uri.

Meanwhile I had landed in safety at Brunnen, and pursued my road to Schwytz. I had intended to pass the night here; but, as the day was not very far spent, I preferred continuing my route in the direction of Einsiedeln, trusting to find some kind of accommodation at a village or hamlet on the road. An eminence, a little to the NW. of Schwytz, just above the point where the roads to Lowertz and Sattel separate, commands an enchanting view to the NW. and S. The middle ground is occupied by the village of Seewen, backed by a broad and precipitous shoulder of the mountain in connexion with the chain of the Righi; beyond it, to the left, lie the lake, town, and islands of Lowertz; the Rossberg, furrowed with the line of broad ruin which twenty

years have done little towards clothing with verdure, and whose huge masses of detached rock are seen heaped up at the end of the lake, and even on the flanks of the opposite mountain. The steep ridge of the Righiberg itself rises on the horizon. On the other hand appear the two towns of Schwytz and Brunnen, with the fair cultivated track between them, the portion of the lake I had just traversed, and a noble pile of mountains and glaciers rising in the back-ground.

But the Pilatus had not been brewing in vain, and different portions of the thunder-storm began to spread over the whole of the landscape. One heavily charged mass of clouds went echoing above the surface of the lake, between the high mountain towards the canton of Uri in the south; a second seemed to swing over towards the Righi; and I had not proceeded many miles to the northward, when the rising wind and louder thunder warned me that I must expect my portion also.

A hamlet called Ecce Homo came very opportunely to save me from being completely wet to the skin. While I am waiting for a pause in the storm to proceed, I cannot do better than indulge my spleen, and have a second grumble about the innumerable beggars.

I will not pretend to say that this nuisance is as unpicturesque as it is decidedly unpoetic; for there are figures among these mendicants that might fairly stand comparison with any Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, or Irish beggar that ever stood with hat in hand; such was the singular expression of countenance, attitude, disposition of drapery, and rich and varied colouring of their garments. But for

poetry, more is wanted :—there is not sufficient dignity either of vice or virtue in any of these Swiss beggars, to render them objects in keeping with the poetic feeling that seems to pervade every thing else in this romantic region. They, therefore, considered abstractedly, are perfectly a nuisance, and equally such in reality. I had no sooner quitted the fertile neighbourhood of the town, and advanced fairly into the hills, when they sprung up and appeared at every turn and corner, of every size and dimensions; of every possible form and age, from the toddling infant to the decrepit old man. And the worst is, that all the saints in the calendar who, in the supplicatory address, were this moment called upon to bless you, are the next entreated to plunge you neck and heels in purgatory, if you should chance not to be charitably inclined. I must not forget to remind the reader that I was here upon the high road to the shrine of Maria Einsiedeln, thus enabling him to account for their numbers, and the peculiarly spiritual expression of their feelings.

At Ecce Homo, I was informed, to my great comfort, that at the hamlet of Rothenthurm, about a league further, I should meet with super-excellent accommodations at the sign of the Red Ox, kept by the *Herr President*, a lofty-sounding title in the ears of an Englishman. However, as I recollected that the Landamman, or principal magistrate of the canton of Schwytz, was innkeeper of the Stag in the town of that name, I thought his Honor the President might be the keeper of a pot-house at Rothenthurm without any compromise of dignity, and made the best of my way thither.

As I passed Sattel, I caught a glimpse of the lake

Egeri, and the scene of the battle of Morgarten, but passed on with the intention of finding my way to it the following morning from Rothenthurm.

At this village I found, as I had been informed, accommodations at the Red Ox, though for their super-excellence I have but little to say. A very indifferent soup, *à l'eau pannée*, was served up to me with most execrable wine, and a most uneasy discreditable bed after that. Mine host, *Derr Herr President*, was the chief part of the evening's entertainment. He was quite a study! A man of large dimensions, very tall and portly, with dirty pantaloons, no coat or cravat, but with an open waistcoat, and an inner garment, of the amplitude of which there could be no suspicion, after noticing the superfluous folds overhanging the waistband of his small-clothes, both fore and aft. Yet under all this questionable garb, I cannot deny but I could detect a considerable portion of dignity and official consequence.

The common room, in a corner of which I had esconced myself with my pen and candle, was a long apartment, serving as family-room, guest-chamber, and kitchen, and was furnished accordingly with several sets of tables and chairs, the largest of which was for the greater part of the evening occupied by a number of Swiss, of various ranks, as I afterwards found. The apartment was heated by a large stove occupying a corner of the room, in addition to a log fire on the hearth.

While his guests were engaged with their indifferent discussions, and still worse wine, *Derr Herr President* perambulated the common room from end to end with his pipe, with an air so erect, and a step

so determined, spoke to one or another of his guests at the long table from time to time with an air of such condescension, and had in general so much deference paid him, that it was easy to see that his dignity in the council was not forgotten in the tap-room either by himself or his neighbours. His very shadow seemed to borrow importance from him, and stalked a little after him on the wall, darkening the pewter dishes and saucepans with corresponding dignity and importance. The titles and bearings of one or two, otherwise very homely looking individuals at the table, were equally remarkable. A personage in a shabby brown coat and woollen small-clothes was styled by a neighbour drinking from the same mug, *Der Herr Kleiner Rathsherr* (his worship of the little council), and never failed to return the compliment by replying very respectfully to *Der Ober Lieutenant* (the First Lieutenant); and on a lumpish-looking peasant quitting the company about bed-time, I was equally astonished and amused to hear the remaining dignitaries join in a full chorus of *Guten abend Herr Statthalter* (Good evening, Master Deputy). Shortly after, *Der Fremde Herr* (the strange gentleman), whose canton no one could guess, though I heard it attempted, took leave for the night, with the best wishes of the assembly.

September 21st.—A lowering sky, and flying storms offered but little opposition to the design I had long formed of visiting the ancient field of battle in this vicinity, if it were ever in my power. I accordingly retraced my steps for half a league towards Sattel, and took a pathway leading round the foot of the mountain towards the lake of Egeri.

MORGARTEN*, the scene of the first struggle of the ancient Swiss for the preservation of that independence which was to them as the breath of their nostrils, is a spot teeming with romantic historical recollections. The history of none of their subsequent battles, striking and spirit-stirring as their details may be, would seem equally characteristic of the feeling of the people with the one in question.

It was during the troubles in the empire, in consequence of the disputed claim of two princes, Lewis of Bavaria, and Frederic of Austria, to the imperial throne, that the Forest Cantons became the avowed object of the undisguised and long-brooded vengeance of the princes of the House of Habsburg.

Eight years had elapsed since the expulsion of the Austrian bailiffs from the country, by the patriots of the Field of Rütli, in the days of Albert; and during this whole period constant disputes, either with the Austrian princes themselves, or with their more immediate neighbours at Einsiedeln, had kept the spirit of hatred and desire of taking summary vengeance alive in the breast of the proud nobles and prelates, whose power and menaces they had so long set at defiance. The Swiss of that day understood and practised none of the politic arts of their enemies. They simply opposed the assertion of their rights, and their readiness to defend them, to the attacks of the more courtly and wily nobles. Excommunication and the imperial interdict had hung over their heads, without producing the effects desired; an overwhelming force was therefore gathered together, under the command of Duke Leopold, brother to

* Vide Müller's *Schweitzergeschichte*, and Planta's *Helvetic Confederacy*.

King Frederic, and forthwith prepared to act against the frontiers of Schwytz and Unterwalden on three distinct points, with the undisguised intention of extirpating the whole race.

Accordingly, in October 1315, 4,000 men, commanded by Otho, Count of Strasberg, advanced into the valley of Oberhasli with the purpose of passing the Brünig, and falling upon the valley of Sarnen in Unterwalden. Twelve hundred from Lucern were appointed to make an attack upon the same canton on the side of the lake.

The principal body of the invaders, under the command of the Duke himself, including a large body of heavy cavalry, the flower of the Austrian chivalry, all the ancient nobility of the lower country, and the many powerful retainers of the ducal house, amounting, according to the chronicles of that period, to 20,000 men, advanced upon the canton of Schwytz from the north. The confederates in the mean time had been fully aware of the storm which had been so long gathering and thickening in the low country beyond their frontiers, and had done what they could to avert its menacing dangers,—not by embassies or by deprecation, but by assembling together and renewing their ancient compact of brotherly union and co-operation. To those of their neighbours who endeavoured to persuade them to listen to terms they answered, ‘that *they* were the injured party, and would, with the help of God, stand firmly by each other to repel any attack however violent.’

Accordingly, when summoned by the near approach of the danger, each of the confederated Cantons sent a body of men to the assistance of the

Schwitzers, whose frontier seemed in most danger. Four hundred men of Uri and three hundred from Unterwalden crossed the lake from their several homes, and, landing at Brunnen, repaired to the town of Schwytz. Here they assembled about the cottage of the old veteran, Rudolph Reding, to seek his counsel in the exigency in which they were placed. Though no longer able to bear arms, his long experience and soundness of judgment, gave him the authority of a father among the confederates; and they did not hesitate an instant to adopt the opinion which he gave. This was, that they should meet the attack of the enemy in the defiles of Morgarten, through which he wisely judged that the Duke would find himself obliged to pass. The whole band then knelt and prayed to God, their sole trust, to bless their arms in defence of their homes and freedom. They then marched forward, 1,300 in number, and took their post below Sattel, near the southern extremity of the lake Egeri, in such a manner as to command the passage through the defiles of Morgarten.

While they were posted here, awaiting the approach of the enemy, a circumstance occurred which pours in the liveliest colours the stern uncompromising principles of the people, the sense of honour and consistency which no circumstances could cause to waver, and the strength of that love of their country for which the inhabitants of these mountains have been so eminently remarkable.

Fifty men, proscribed and exiled from their homes in the Forest Cantons for various offences against the magistracy, hearing of the danger impending over their native mountains, assembled together on the frontier, and sent to the post of the confederates

to pray, that, in the pressing hour of danger which was approaching, they might be permitted to join the ranks of their offended brethren, and adventure their lives in the cause of their native land, to prove, that, though banished and condemned, they were not unworthy of their common ancestors.

Though the principle which actuated this request must have thrilled through the bosoms of the party to whom it was made, their petition was not acceded to; it being judged dishonourable to depart from a rule established by law, because the danger was imminent.

Though repulsed, the fifty were not to be turned from their devotion; and, taking a position overhanging the defile, a little beyond the frontier, they collected a quantity of rubbish, masses of loose rock, trunks of trees, and missiles, and awaited the approach of the common enemy.

In descending from the village of Sattel, towards the lake, the pathway soon enters a short but narrow defile, pent up and overhung by rocks of breccia. Above this a small plain communicates with the mountain of Sattel, whose steep and wooded flanks hem in the valley and lake to the eastward. Immediately on emerging from this narrow passage, the first object that presents itself is a small chapel built on the slope towards the lake, the waters of which have evidently once occupied a far greater portion of the valley than at present.

The heights are every where clothed with wood, and the sides of the mountains closing in the valley very broken and strewn with large and disjointed masses of rock. The road passes round the eastern margin of the lake, and leads by a long, narrow, and

rugged route to the lower extremity, and through the mountains to the north towards the lake of Zug.

It was from this portion of the country that the 1,300 confederates, posted over the upper end of the valley, descried the advancing files of the invading host at early dawn, on the 15th of October, slowly and cautiously advancing over the rugged path towards the head of the lake.

Foremost came the cavalry, commanded by Montfort de Tett nang, with their gorgeous and glistening display of costly armour, clashing as they advanced with difficulty over the rocky path, and through the forest between the mountain and the water's edge. After them, at a considerable distance, came the compressed line of infantry completely shutting up the entrance into the valley by their numbers.

When the fifty exiles saw the advanced lines of the cavalry toiling through the narrow passage below them, they raised a shout of rage and defiance, and instantly commenced the discharge of the missiles they had collected. Trunks of trees, vollies of stones, and large fragments of the loose rock, which the peculiar construction of their position supplied and rendered available, were sent thundering down upon the startled nobles and their horses, who, crowded and pent up between the mountain and lake, were unable to advance with rapidity, and still more to recede past the crowded infantry in the rear.

The confederates, seeing the impression made by this unexpected blow, instantly rushed down the mountain on to the flank of the column. Here the combat was a trial of strength between man and man, and the knight with his skill and armour of

proof could offer under such circumstances but little effective defence to the attack of the strong unshackled active mountaineer, whose rude halberd, weighty two-handed sword, or still heavier *morning-star**, dashed his armour to atoms, and threw him from his affrighted charger. A slight frost added to the difficulties of the enemy.

In this first attack the carnage was dreadful. Here perished Landenberg, one of the expelled bailiffs and relative of Herman Gessler, with two near kinsmen of that baron, all burning with revenge against the confederates ;—Rudolph of Habsburg-Lauffenberg, four barons of the house of Toggenburg, three of Bonstetten, two Hallwyls, three Urikons, and many other heads of noble families. The lake was crowded with dead, and those who in desperation sought a way of escaping through its waters. The whole column gave way in a panic, and recoiled upon the infantry, throwing it into equal confusion. The rout now became general. Pent up in a narrow pass, there was no room for evolutions, and the carnage continued unchecked.

Leopold himself, infuriate with rage and shame, when he saw the defeat of his cavalry and the dismay of his troops, was with difficulty extricated from the fate of many of his nobles, and fled under the guidance of a peasant by lone and solitary paths over the mountains to the town of Winterthur.

Thus ended this memorable action : and in the course of the morning the warriors, with comparatively little loss, returned to their capital.

The same day both the other attacks made si-

* A mace, termed so in the German language from the star-like appearance given to the extremity by the steel spikes which surround it.

multaneously on different points of the Canton of Unterwalden were alike repulsed ; a portion of the warriors who had battled at early dawn at Morgarten, crossing the lake on a summons from the other points attacked, and assisting in the defeat of the enemy at Burgen and Alpnach.

Something still remains to be mentioned. Before the close of this eventful day the people met together to give thanks to God, to whom they in the simple faith of these early times never hesitated to give the glory of their success. They then received the fifty exiles once more into their body, as brethren and members of their confederacy, wiping away the memory of their offences as an act of justice for their devotion in the hour of need : and finally agreed that this day should be consecrated and annually observed with rejoicings for the great victory, and prayers for the repose of the souls of their brethren in arms, who had fallen in defence of their common liberties.

This continued to be the case up to a very late period.

The chapel erected on the field of battle is a small angular building, with spreading roof, rural portico, and conical belfry. Over the entrance is a painting representing the first attack of the confederates.

The ground has without doubt undergone considerable and violent changes during the course of the five centuries since this battle ; yet the position is so marked and peculiar, that none of these have been sufficient to destroy the remarkable correspondence of the spot with the accounts handed down to us of this day, and the exact scene of action.

I have been seduced into more detail in this single instance than is properly consistent with the general method pursued in these pages, but impulse has

guided me here, as it may have been observed to have done in some other instances.

After passing some hours at this place, I retraced my steps, the third time, to Rothenthurm, and, breakfasting, bade the *Herr President* farewell, and continued my route.

Two hours' walk over an indifferent style of country brought me to the monasteries and chapel of St. Maria Einsiedeln.

From the time that I quitted the neighbourhood of Schywtz, I had met or overtaken great numbers of pilgrims going or returning from the shrine of this chapel, most of them, rosary in hand, and repeating aloud their aves or paternosters. Several groups were sufficiently picturesque, from the prevalence of the costumes of various Catholic cantons. Many of these pilgrims were from the Vallais and the canton of Friburg, and there were even individuals from the Tyrol and the Black Forest.

The village of Einsiedeln consists of 180 or 200 houses, nearly all of which are inns and lodging-houses for the entertainment of the pilgrims. Surely such a number of signs were never seen together since the old-fashioned custom once prevalent with tradesmen in English towns has been abandoned. All the saints in the calendar, the sun, moon, and stars, all things on the earth, above the earth, and under the earth, seem to have been put in requisition to furnish forth a sufficient choice and variety. The consequence is, the most appalling confusion and ludicrous proximities. There is St. John hung between the Red Cow and the Calf's Head, and the Cod-fish dangling between holy St. Benedict and one of his contemporaries.

The monasteries and the great church form a very spacious and imposing quadrangle. The latter, in the centre of the southern façade, has two high towers and a miniature cupola or lantern in the centre. The plan of the whole may be called magnificent.

For some reason or other, I was informed that I should not be allowed to see the interior of the monasteries and the libraries till evening ; I had therefore to content myself with a passing glance at the church and the exterior. This foundation is extremely ancient, said to have been in the ninth century. The very first notice extant of the existence of the ancient Swiss in the neighbouring mountains, is in the record of a quarrel between them and an abbot of Einsiedeln, in the beginning of the twelfth century ; and it would appear that, at that time already, the abbots of this monastery were very powerful, and possessed large influence with the emperors. They were very bad neighbours to the Schwitzers, and never failed to do them mischief, and to catch at a quarrel when it was possible. A body of the retainers of this abbey appeared in the ranks of Leopold at Morgarten, under the special protection of the sacred banner of the abbey, which, however, seems not to have had much in its power, nor to have fared much better than the lay-pennons with which it was unfortunately associated.

The present buildings are of modern construction, and situated quite free of the village on an elevated plateau. In advance of the great flight of steps leading to the entrance stands a magnificent fountain, consisting of a cupola, supported upon seven columns, and surmounted with a gilt image of the Virgin. The water continually flows from fourteen lions' heads in the pedestals.

The Grecian interior of the church corresponds with the general plan. But my head aches with the remembrance of the gaudy finery which covers the whole from the ceiling to the pavement. Numbers of pilgrims were on their knees before the altars. As might be supposed, the votive paintings deposited here in acknowledgment of the miraculous preservations, interpositions, and cures of our Lady of the Hermitage are innumerable.

From Einsiedeln I proceeded to the summit of the Etzel, a ridge bounding the valley of the Sihl on the right, and came in sight of the lake of Zurich, stretching, with the delicious country which covers its banks, far northward. My further route to Rapperschwyl, a venerable old town on the opposite shore, and thence eight or nine miles to the east, to the town of Uznach, beyond the upper extremity of the lake, offered nothing deserving of notice. I had been walking in heavy rain the greater part of the day. There appeared more than ordinary resemblance between the corner of St. Gall, through which I had passed from Rapperschwyl, the frontier town, to Uznach, and certain portions of English scenery. The gentle hills, hedges, fine green verdure, and numerous factories and mills, and, perhaps I may be permitted to add, the steady rain—brought the latter constantly to my mind.

Sept. 22nd.—Uznach was once a fortified town, and is still marked as such in the maps, though all the pretensions I could discover at present to that class, consisted in the crowded character of the exterior houses, with their backs facing a narrow fosse, and the occasional projection of an old tower or gateway.

Immediately to the north-east rises the tract of high country called the Himmelwald; and, in front, the wide plain between the lakes of Zurich and Wallenstatt, intersected by the canal of the Linth, extends far towards the south-east, in the direction of the latter. Uznach was of considerable importance in early times, as it commanded the pass into the valley of the Gaster.

The passage of the Himmelwald, from Uznach to the vale of the Thur, was long, and rendered less amusing than I had hoped, by the thick clouds covering the higher country; and I regret that the same observation applies to the greater part of this day's route.

At the town of Lichtensteg I left the bank of the Thur; and, crossing a portion of the mountainous district called the Toggenburg, entered the canton of Appenzell, through which I proceeded over an undulating country to Herisau the capital.

Upon a high ridge, between the hamlet of Schö-nengrund and this town, I had come in sight of the wide lake of Constance to the north, and large portions of the cantons of St. Gall and Thurgau in the middle ground; and descended rapidly, with a brightening sky and warm sun, towards the low country.

My object was to reach the town of Rorschach, a flourishing port towards the upper extremity of the lake. I accordingly made no stay in the town of St. Gall, but, making the best use of the shortening day, pursued my route through a delightful tract of country, sloping gradually from the mountains, and entered Rorschach, just as the last beams of a setting sun were illuminating the agitated waters of the noble lake of Constance or Bodensee, to whose margin I had now advanced.

CHAPTER X.

“ The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.”

HOWEVER little the scenery of the Bodensee may bear comparison with the peculiar magnificence of that which is spread round a large portion of the basin of the lake of Geneva, it may still lay claim to a very considerable degree of interest and beauty.

Towards this extremity of Switzerland, Alpine scenery, properly so called, may be said to be confined to the southern side of an imaginary line drawn from the head of the lake of Zurich, to the lower division of the great valley of the Rhine ; the character of the country to the north assuming a perfectly distinct aspect, among the details of which the traveller must no longer look for the imposing and abrupt features distinguishing the higher Alps.

The district of the Himmelwald, the northern portions of the Toggenburg, and the canton of Appenzell, though hilly and maintaining a considerable elevation above the level of the lakes of Zurich and Constance, would not appear to possess very striking features, presenting for the most parts a naked undulating surface, whose ridges, though divided by deep dells, rarely rise to any great elevation above the mean height of the district, and are seldom broken into picturesque forms. And these features pre-

vail till the traveller approaches the canton of Thurgau, and the northern portion of St. Gall. Here the mountains break down more or less rapidly towards the valley of the Thur, and the lake of Constance; and the character of the scenery is again completely changed. Towards the lower extremity of the lake, a large tract of fruitful country, worthy of being called the garden of Switzerland, studded with villages, and appearing from the heights like an immense orchard, intervenes between the shore and the base of the mountains; while, towards the opening into the Rhine valley at the upper extremity, the broken declivities of the latter advance close to the water's edge.

From the portion of the heights rising behind the town of Rorschach, the eye commands an horizon of singular interest, comprising the whole of the tract just spoken of, the city of Constance at the further extremity of the lake; portions of the states of Baden, Wirtemberg, and Bavaria, on the opposite shores; the Austrian frontier, and the estuary of the Rhine to the east; the Rheinthal receding among the mountains of the Grisons; many snowy points of the Alps in that romantic country and on the Tyrol frontier; and portions of the Toggenburg, and even of the Jura, and Black Forest, in other parts of the panorama.

Rorschach and its neighbourhood might have become tolerably familiar to me, during the course of the three weeks' stay which followed my rencontre with a hospitable family of friends from the west of Switzerland, at that time resident in the vicinity; but the unpropitious state of the weather, during the greater part of that interval, was a sad hindrance

to excursions of any length. A bright hour from time time, and a fair autumnal day, which was a still greater rarity, afforded me, nevertheless, some few brief opportunities of looking about the neighbourhood ; and, such as it may be, I am tempted to preserve among my sketches some record of my visit to the east of Switzerland.

Not far from the outskirts of the town, upon the slope of the hill, stands the *Statthaltereii*, an ancient palace of the former proud and powerful abbots of St. Gall, once the lords of the greater part of the fine and fertile region now comprised within the limits of the canton. It is a long dilapidated pile of building, and at present devoted to the purposes of a farm-house, and more remarkable for the beauty of the view commanded from its terrace, than for any thing in its present appearance. The only sign of its former appropriation, as far as I know, consists in the pilgrimage made by the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the town, to attend early matins in the forlorn old chapel, every Friday.

My attention in the early morning strolls in the vicinity was soon directed towards another antiquated building, rising out of the forest about half a mile higher up the broken slopes of the mountain.

I have in no country seen a wilder-looking, more desolate, group of buildings than that which composes the old castle of St. Anne. It is perched upon a small jutting promontory of sand-stone rock, rising on a steep acclivity ; round which, two deep and narrow gullies have been mined by the torrents, and form natural defences to the approach by their depth, and the trees and brushwood by which they

are concealed and choked. The main entrance is at the back. The buildings consist of a very ancient tower, or keep, with a comparatively modern erection attached to it. The whole mass is tightly packed together, and has in height what it wants in breadth. A gloomy strip of forest clothes the declivity immediately beneath it. No one will doubt its being thoroughly haunted, (as I found it is accused of being,) who has any inclination to involuntary credence in these matters. As I stood in the entrance of the wood below, and looked up the huge and time-stained façade, with its numerous windows and loop-holes of all sorts, sizes, and forms, not two alike; some with plain grating, others half walled in; some with a sort of iron cage appended to them, others deep in the wall, or overhanging the abyss; and hardly two in a straight line; and thought of the dreary apartments to which they afforded a twilight, I felt my belief in the marvellous wonderfully excited, and almost expected, though in broad daylight, to see some uncouth figure peeping out of one or another of these cheerless loop-holes.

At a second visit I made my way into its interior. It is inhabited by a farmer and his family, if I may so term the occupation of one or two of the smallest apartments; while the larger and by far the greater number are dreary and untenanted, except by the bat, the owl, the rat, and the spider. The walls throughout are of great thickness, particularly those of the ancient quadrangular keep. Into this there is no entrance from without, and the vast bulk of the materials employed in its construction must have shut out all hope for ever from the wretch immured among the foundation stones. A low portal

in the interior wall communicating with one of the upper chambers of the castle, allows the visitor to enter the tower and glance into the horrible abyss into which a portion of the floor has sunk.

The apartments are extremely rude in their disposition and formation. The dwelling-room of the present occupants is well decorated and fortified with crucifixes, the portraits of saints, and so forth,—besides a paper of acknowledged virtue in cases, where, as in the present, there is some reason to dread the unwelcome visits of both visible or invisible spiritual guests: it is called *Heiliger Jacobs haus-segen* (St. James's house-blessing).

I was more than ever struck by the desolate appearance of the exterior, rising so abruptly on the mountain side, and swathed in a body of light mist in constant motion.

The castle of St. Anne is one of a line of castles, built or renewed in the times when the Austrians held the sovereignty here, at such convenient distances as rendered communication by signal easy. Most of them are now level with the ground.

The next, to the westward, is the Sulzberg. It is by no means so romantic in appearance as its neighbour, though situated on much the same kind of knoll on the mountain side over the village of Ober-Goldach. Its reputation as the resort of the restless and dissatisfied spirits of the departed is even worse than that of the other; and I was much amused to hear the farmer who rented it own, that, in consequence of the fearful midnight route in the deserted apartments, and the visits of an equally disagreeable solitary visitor, who now and then came to peep at his wife and himself when in bed, in spite

of both *Saint James's house-blessing* and holy water, the whole family preferred sleeping at the miller's, without the walls.

This castle suffered a long siege by the Swedes, in the thirty years' war. It is now dismantled, and in a great measure demolished; the keep reduced to two-thirds of the original height, the drawbridge and portcullis taken away, and the fosse filled up. The view from every unobstructed point on the declivity of this line of hills is magnificent for its extent and richness.

A wide stretch of open country on the Austrian frontier, to the east of the estuary of the Rhine, was frequently resorted to by my host and myself, during the intervals of fair weather. The quantity of game in those thinly inhabited plains was our proper lure; yet, in default of sport, there was sufficient entertainment to be gathered from the displays of the surrounding scenery, to make up for light game-bags, when such were our fortune. Trifling as these excursions were, I shall venture to select one for insertion, as it will afford an opportunity of giving the outlines of the scenery amidst which the Rhine, after its long and distracted course in the deep valleys of the Grisons, pours its variable stream into the bosom of the noble lake of Constance.

The route from Rorschach to the entrance of the Rheinthal passes between the mountains and the lake for some time, and then following the bent of the former, as they retire to the southward, enters the Rhine-valley and reaches the frontier town of Rheinek. A mile or two further up the stream, we generally passed the river with our vehicle to the

Austrian post at St. Johann, and thence proceeded to the NE. to Fussach. The plains, toward the upper extremity of which this village is situated, stretch for many miles to the south and east, having the Rhine as a boundary to the west, and the shore of the lake to the north. The greater part appears to be alluvial, and formed by the depositions brought down for ages by the river, which has gradually worked its way more and more towards the mountains of Appenzell, and now in many places touches their base.

Southward, the country has been subjected to a rude process of draining and cultivation, but towards the mouth of the Rhine and the lake, lie extensive tracts unreclaimed by the labour of man, and exhibiting either a soft spongy soil covered with short grass, or flats entirely under water, and overgrown with extensive plantations of towering reeds, flags, and rushes, extending for miles along the shores. This was to be the scene of action on the occasion in question.

I am no great shot, and a still worse fisherman; and had I not found more amusement than that which was to be gathered from my own success, I should have but little pleasure in recollecting how I had submitted to wade like a heron for the greater part of an autumnal day.

Before quitting Fussach, it was thought advisable that our party should be augmented by no less a personage than a regular and acknowledged poacher, whose profession is equally common in these parts as in our own country, but rather more kindly and civilly dealt by, as the gentry find it sometimes impossible to get a fair day's sport in these marshes,

without the help of their ill-gotten experience ; such was our case. Our guide, for as such he acted, was as complete a specimen of the poacher as it is possible to imagine ; he had the true poacher's eye and gait, his gun was a most decided poacher's gun, and his dog *Spitz* would have matched the most villainous quadruped in the train of Starlight Tom.

About half an hour's walk from Fussach, we reached the above-mentioned marshes. The objects of our chase were snipes, ducks, and bustards—but that is not my business at present. The ensuing hours were spent partly alone, and partly in the neighbourhood of my companions, as we happened to be drawn nearer or farther from each other, for the most part mid-leg deep in water and mud, and buried among the throng of gigantic reeds and rushes which often rose several feet above our heads, and hid every thing from us but the sky above.

Somehow or other, the birds were very wild, and both the poacher, his gun, and his dog seemed once or twice to have lost their cunning. I never saw a trio linked together who were capable of such contradictory behaviour. In the first place, Hans took offence at his great hound not standing quiet and pointing, when his education should have taught him to do so ; and, before either *Spitz* or the rest of the party were aware, turned sharp round upon the poor brute, and gave him the contents of his gun ; and away ran *Spitz* bleeding back to Fussach, where we afterwards saw him in tolerable spirits. In the second place, the gun, as if resenting the offence offered to its four-footed coadjutor, thought proper to let fly at the breech instead of at the muzzle, and with that the lock and the stock separated. But, in

no wise astonished, Hans took a knife, a couple of nails, and some packthread out of his pocket, and, by the help of a large pebble, which he used as a hammer, with the utmost coolness fastened the refractory members together again, drew the shot, reloaded, and went on shooting with as much assurance as if he had been handling one of Forsyth's best percussion fowling-pieces.

I avow, that after I had had such specimens of their humours, I preferred seeing Hans and his gun at a considerable distance.

The day was one of those tranquil sunny days of autumn, when the mists which obscured the early rays of the sun, having dissipated late in the morning, would seem to have purified the air, and leave the atmosphere clearer and more transparent than ever. As long as I was plunging with stealthy steps in the water and mud of the marsh, breaking a narrow pathway for myself through the reeds, I was not in a situation to remark much in my vicinity. But, when, after toiling for half an hour through such a belt of plantation, I emerged upon one of the little fields with which they are interspersed, where the serf takes an advantage of an accidental rise, to drain the ground and mow the coarse grass which it produces; the view which burst upon me was ten times more beautiful and welcome from the contrast, and the green sward truly grateful to the sight, which ached with long exposure to the sun, the bright yellow of the reeds, and the blue sky against which the latter displayed themselves.

On one occasion I found myself almost close upon the shore of the lake. The wide expanse of water, gently agitated by the breeze, reflected the deep

blue of the heavens, by a yet deeper and more intense hue. To the NW. no land was visible, so that the water line formed the horizon. Directly over against me, on the north shore, lay the town and citadel of Lindau, so distinct and bright in the clear atmosphere, that, though several miles distant, it seemed as though a shot from its battlements might strike the shore on this side the Bodensee. Westward of this town the coast of Wirtemberg and Baden ran narrower and narrower, till it faded into indistinctness, and mingled with the hue of the waters. Two or three picturesque vessels, with large white sails streched upon their masts, were slowly making their way towards Bregenz; and others, in the distance, off Rorschach and Arbonne, lay like flakes of snow on the blue surface of the lake. To the SW. I saw the Rheinspitz, a long low promontory, stretching far into the waters and the vast plains, with the marshes in the foreground. The eye lost all idea of distance, while passing its rapid glance over this wide extent of level country, and, but for an instant detained by the receding spires of Fussach, Lustnau, St. Johann, Maria-Bildstein, and others, rested upon the long line of mountains forming the southern and western horizon, swathed in the blue atmosphere, and here and there chequered by a fleecy cloud.

The snows of the Scesa Plana and other more distant and elevated Alps on the Tyrol frontier, rose far above the green and forested chain of the Vor-Arlberg forming the boundary of the plains; and a little more to the left the long vista of the Rhine-valley receded farther and farther into the mountains of the Grisons, even to the Galanda, rising over

the town of Coire. This was a scene which my occasional attainment of a more open spot of ground, after long immersion in the marsh, gave me frequent opportunities of beholding with renewed pleasure. By degrees we drew insensibly together as the reddening hue that began to spread over the mountains gave warning of the speedy close of the short autumnal day. Between six and seven we returned to Fussach, resumed our seats in the vehicle, and, crossing the Rhine, returned to Rorschach with the produce of our day's sport.

Bregenz, the most considerable town upon this portion of the Austrian frontier, is situated at the eastern extremity of the lake, at the foot of a range of low hills, which form a barrier to its waters, and at the same time the boundary of the plains towards the east. It was formerly considered a place of considerable strength. Perched on a high and singular rock, somewhat to the SE. of the town is the chapel of St. Gebhard, the site of a *ci-devant* strong fortress. The garrison church is built upon a tumulus raised over the bodies of an unsuccessful band of Appenzellers, who here met with defeat from the Suabian chivalry.

During the long and bloody wars waged, in the fifteenth century, between the confederates and the Suabian league, the whole of this frontier was the scene of numerous and fierce encounters; and the repulse of the Appenzellers at Bregenz, was one of the very few laurels of which the Imperialists could boast.

The snow, which covered all the heights, after one or two days rainy weather in the second week in

October, warned me of the approach of a season when the prosecution of my plan of return would be impracticable. I therefore took advantage of the first favourable change, towards the close of the week, and made my arrangements for quitting Rorschach. My friend had formed a plan of accompanying me into the Rheinthal, and we accordingly started together in an open carriage (*October 14th*) for Balzers, a village in the principality of Lichtenstein, adjoining the Grison frontier.

Passing through Rheinek, we continued our route to the second ferry over the Rhine, at Mondstein, and there crossed to the Austrian side of the river. Though I have nothing personally to complain of, from having always gone to and fro through the lines of the Austrian *douaniers* under good escort, I have seen few frontiers better garnished with official dignitaries of every kind. The whole right shore of the Rhine, from Feldkirch on the boudary of the principality of Lichtenstein to the Rheinspitz, is one continued line of spies, patrols, chasseurs, and revenue officers, ever on the hunt after smugglers. There had just been an affray at this point between two companies of these adverse professions, in which a poor smuggler had lost his life. The booty must have been worth fighting for, as one of the soldiers told me his share had amounted to above a hundred dollars, or near twenty-five pounds. The penalty upon the smuggler is, eight times the value of the articles intercepted, or the galleys in case of non-payment.

From the bank of the river we crossed the plains to the small town of Hohen-Embs, principally inhabited by Jews, of whom it is said to contain up-

wards of 3000. Here the Prince of Seil has a palace; and there are sulphur baths and springs in the vicinity.

Hohen-Embs is situated at the foot of a diversified and rocky line of inferior hills, which would appear to have rolled down from the heights of the Vor-Arlberg, whose high broken ridges rise into the vapours immediately behind. There are the ruins of two castles, perched among the woods and precipices, both extremely picturesque.

Leaving the town to the east, we entered the valley of the Rhine. Though inclosed by mountains, it still continues of a very considerable width for many leagues higher up, the bottom of the vale being occupied by a strip of fenny and level country. A lofty range of precipitous mountains runs at some distance from the west bank, and forms the boundary of St. Gall and Appenzell.

Our route lay by Götzis to Feldkirch, a small town with a wall and ditch, and commanded by a strong castle. This town is situated at the entrance of the valley of the Ill or Montafun, leading into the Tyrol.

We here crossed the boundary into the principality of Lichtenstein, and soon arrived at the capital, Vadutz. The Rhine valley, above Feldkirch, is bounded to the east by high ridges covered with wood, stretching southward to the many peaks and pinnacles of the Falknis on the Grison frontier. They abound with deer of the large race, boars, and game of every kind, and afford shelter to numerous bands of smugglers. The forest is chiefly beech.

A short time before we arrived at Vadutz, my companion pointed out to me a ruined tower but

lately discovered in cutting the pine forest on one of the huge buttresses reared against the sides of the range to our left. There was no sort of notice or tradition of its existence in the annals of the country. It is a horribly black and dismal looking building, confirming by its appearance the idea of the country people, that it had been in former times the concealed retreat of banditti.

A second castle of this kind had been discovered about the same time, while cutting down a forest in the environs of Coire.

The vast number of ruined castles along the whole course of the Rhine, the great natural boundary of so many kingdoms, must surprise the generality of travellers, and particularly one whose progress is sufficiently tardy to admit of a frequent digression from the main routes into the recesses of the hills and forests which beset its valley in various portions of its long and varied course from the Alps to the Low Countries. An astonishing number of these ruined fastnesses are dispersed among the latter on both sides of the Rhine, vying with each other in strength as well as in singularity of situation.

With exception of some in the Eifel, a mountainous district between the Rhine, the left bank of the Moselle, and the French frontier, but few are posted on very commanding eminences with regard to the surrounding country. The choice of position seems to have fallen, either upon the advanced though inferior rocky hills in front of the main ridges, as in the case of those more immediately upon the Rhine bank, or on some detached knoll rising from

the bosom of one of those profound hollows so common in the recesses of the forests.

In the Eifel, however, many of the numerous castles are situated on most imposing eminences. The huge round-tower of the Aremberg, the Nuremberg in the interior of the country, the Landskrone on the Aar near Sinzig, and others in the same wild and peculiar region, are visible from a considerable distance in every direction, being much more elevated than any on the Rhine itself, the Drachenfels not excepted.

Of all these innumerable rude fortresses not one has survived the abolition of feudal rights and tyranny. Many are in the last stage of ruin, hardly recording their site by irregular mounds and low walls. All bear more or less evident signs of the hot strife in which their bulwarks were won and overthrown, and of the further wreck which time is yearly working among their remains. Here or there a gigantic donjon still bids defiance to the waste of centuries, even as it has to the vengeance which levelled the surrounding defences, and promises fair, from its immense strength and scarcely perishable materials, to stand forth for many long years, as a land mark for future generations.

There is something singularly romantic in the aspect of these remains of past greatness and prowess, as they arise before the wanderer of the hills and forests. The wild legends attached to many, and the faint and partial light which tradition or history throws upon some of the most considerable, carries back the imagination to the scenes and characters of early time; while the thick veil which envelopes the past destinies of most, instead of benumbing the

force of fancy, gives it greater play, because no boundary lines are laid down for its restriction.

Vadutz is a small town placed close under the mountain, upon whose advancing ridges the castle is built. It is the *Residenz*, or metropolis of the principality of Lichtenstein, a tract of country about twelve miles in length, and ten in breadth, lying between the Rhine and the Austrian and Grison frontier. I believe it is the most inconsiderable among the many small independent principalities in Germany; certainly the smallest that sends a vote to the Diet. It furnishes sixty-nine soldiers to the Germanic confederation. The present prince is field-marshal in the Austrian service, and has made over his vote to the Emperor.

Being a free country, it is the paradise of smugglers, who, having a large depot of their wares close upon the Austrian frontier, take every opportunity to skulk across the forested ridge before spoken of. This has been rendered a more difficult enterprise, since the Austrians have cut down a thick forest which formerly clothed the mountain side, and gave them shelter in their passage. Numbers of *jauners* or gypsies also take refuge here, and are considered good and creditable society.

About dusk we arrived at Balzers, a small village at the foot of the Falknis, and near the commencement of the pass called the Luciensteig, leading into the Grisons.

Balzers is situated at the edge of a low marshy plain, considerably to the eastward of the general line of the river. This plain is shut in on all sides by high mountains, except towards the long valley by which the Rhine runs off to the north, and a

narrow pass through which it enters from the Grison mountains.

But little occurred during two days' stay in this neighbourhood worthy of record. The *Italian wind* blew uncommonly hard, and did not fail to produce the violent pain in the head which is the usual effect upon those unaccustomed to it.

A rapid excursion across the Luciensteig and the Grison frontier was not favourable to observation of any kind. I therefore pass on to *October 17th*—when, M. de S. quitting Balzers on his return to Rorschach at early morning, I felt there was nothing further to detain me, and taking up my staff and knapsack, commenced my return home also.

It is seldom that I have passed through the same proportion of magnificent scenery in one day's walk as that which displayed itself around me on this first resumption of my usual mode of travelling.

A footpath led me across the marshes under the ruined castle of Balzers to the Rhine, where I was ferried over, and pursued the high road to the town of Sargans.

From the hamlet of Trübbach on the left bank, the view opens a considerable way up the Rheintal, which here exhibits an even surface of some extent, but so liable to be laid waste by the sudden and impetuous movements of this unruly and powerful mountain stream, that a large tract is left perfectly barren, or covered with alders or other loose shrubs and bushes, without any attempt at cultivation. This occasional bed of the river stretches towards the foot of the eminences upon which the town and castle of Sargans are situated, or, in other words,

to the low eminence separating the valley of the Rhine from the small vale of the Seez, leading into the lake of Wallenstatt.

This small valley, which is now threaded by an inconsiderable mountain-torrent, may, it is possible, and even probable, one day be the theatre of a singular and terrific natural convulsion, and become remarkable as affording a new channel for the Rhine. It is supposed, and there is considerable reason to apprehend, that this river may sooner or later quit the valley which bears its name, and in which it has flowed for ages, in consequence of the obstructions gradually accumulating in it, and by its irruption into a new bed, and over a new line of country, produce extraordinary changes in the features of the east of Switzerland.

The grounds upon which this supposition is founded are the following:—The Lanquart, a turbulent and capricious mountain-river, flowing through the Pratigau in the Grisons, and whose junction with the Rhine occurs about six miles above the town of Sargans, has for a number of years been the means of causing the bed of the Rhine below its junction to change its level in an astonishing degree, by the immense quantities of gravel, earth, and sand which it yearly dislodges, and brings down into the main stream.

As the fall of the Rhine at the point of junction is considerable, and the bed narrow, this alluvial matter is carried down by the force of the current to the open country before Sargans, where the fall, and consequent velocity of the stream, is inconsiderable, and the surrounding land flat and marshy.

Here, precisely opposite the valley of the Seez,

which bends off to the NW., and which is only separated from the valley of the Rhine by a narrow ridge of earthy deposit, the greatest alteration in the bed of the river is observed to have taken place, from the accumulation of this rubbish, and the consequent rise of the level of the stream. The geologist, M. de Buch, has measured the relative heights of the bed of the Rhine in floods, and that of the slope of the adjacent valley at this point, and finds only twenty-four feet difference. He therefore surmises that whenever the river shall, either by the gradual rise of its bed, or in an unusual flood, gain this height, or effect the smallest aperture, the greatest part of its waters must precipitate themselves into this new channel, never to return to their ancient bed. For the fall through the valley of the Seez, into the lake of Wallenstatt is so much greater than that in the present valley of the Rhine, that the new channel must naturally become the ordinary one. Should such a change ever take place, the consequences must be singular in the highest degree.

The lake of Wallenstatt, through the whole length of which the flood will pass, far from diminishing the peril to the lower country, must add to it in a great degree; its perpendicular shores keeping the mass of water together in the same direction given them by the line of their new channel. Falling into the Limmat at Wesen, it is probable that the whole of the flats to the lake of Zurich will become an intermediate lake, joining the two lakes of Zurich and Wallenstatt.

The city of Zurich, situated at the point of exit of the Limmat from the present lake, will be greatly endangered, if not destroyed. The valley of the

Limmat will then guide the stream to its junction with the Reuss and the Aar, and the Rhine will not fall into its old bed before the point where these united streams at present join it, midway between Schaffhausen and Basle. The present Rheinthal will be a marsh, the lake of Constance comparatively stagnant, and the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen a paltry cascade. So much for speculation.

M. de Buch is of opinion, from the deposition of gravels in the valley of the Seez identifying themselves with the rocks of the upper Rheinthal, that at one time or another a portion of the waters of the Rhine actually forced a passage in this direction, and passed into the lake of Wallenstatt.

Sargans is a small town, occupying a most romantic situation at the foot of the elevated rock upon which its castle is erected, and overlooks both the Rhine-valley, and the vale leading to Wallenstatt.

To the right the rocky heights of Balfries are continued by an elevated chain from Sargans, till they join the remarkable mountain summits called the *Sieben Churfürsten*, or Seven Electors, which tower over the lake of Wallenstatt. The whole course of the valley of the Seez, to the town of Wallenstatt, situated at the head of the lake, is varied and romantic in the highest degree.

The town of Wallenstatt I found situated under the mountains on the right side of the valley, nearly opposite a part of the chain where a deep and black rift deforms the face of the precipices. It was fair day, and the inhabitants of these valleys were assembled in furtherance of their various pursuits of business or pleasure. The costume of the peasantry was very simple: the principal feature in the female

dress was a close cap with blue ribbons; and the same colour predominated in the garb of the men.

After rounding the head of the lake I struck into a footpath upon the south side, which I was directed to keep for five leagues, till I should reach Mollis in the canton of Glarus. This may be considered a fatiguing road, but it is certainly a most delightful one, and rendered peculiarly so by its roughness and irregularity: now keeping the water's edge, or running through the woods which occasionally descend to the very margin, and then mounting many hundred feet above it to pass the rocky and advancing headlands. This small lake is remarkable for the truly wild and alpine scenery which surrounds it. While the side on which the traveller advances is broken into various irregular eminences descending from the high summits of the Mürtenstock and Schilthorn, which tower up in the interior of the country to the south, and is diversified by many villages, forests, pastures, châlets, and promontories; the northern margin is bounded by one long and continuous line of tremendous precipices forming the flanks and base of the Sieben Churfürsten, and the still loftier Leistkamm. These soar to several thousand feet above the lake, with hardly a break on their whole surface sufficiently horizontal to admit the scanty verdure of those high regions to chequer the gray rock with green.

Soon after passing the village of Filzbach, situated on one of the bold promontories just mentioned, I began to lose sight of the head of the lake and its tiara of mountains, and in its stead gained a view of the country to the west, which might vie with it in

beauty. Straight before me, across the valley of the Linth, rose the rocky and varied mountains of the Wiggis chain; in the deep hollow, a little more to the right, I saw the termination of the lake, the little town of Wesen, and the Linth canal stretching far away over the flats towards the lake of Zurich, of which the southern extremity was visible in the distance, with the heights of the Himmelwald indistinct and reddening in the glowing mists of the evening. On my turning still more to the SW., by rounding the elevated promontory on which I had been advancing for some time, the valley of the Linth displayed itself, with its numerous villages, and surrounding mountains, among which the Glärnisch, a huge square-headed mass of precipitous rock, crowned with its heavy burden of ice and snow, towered over the entrance into the Klönthal. A long descent brought me to Mollis, leaving the town of Näfels to the right. The vicinity of Näfels is remarkable as being the scene of two great victories gained by the confederates over their oppressors in the 12th century.

By the time I reached and entered the town of Glarus, the shades of evening had spread over the valley, and the stars were glistening above the mountains by which this romantic spot is completely environed. The inn to which caprice directed me turned out to be so singularly constructed in the interior, that, as I went through the lower apartments, I sincerely hoped that it might not prove to be of equally bad reputation with the castle of Saint Anne. However, nothing occurred during the course of the night to strengthen the surmise.

At early morning, I was ready to start. The town is built in an irregular line, extending from the foot of the eminences attached to the Vorder-Glärnisch, towards the Linth.

How exquisite, how beautiful are those few and sunny days, which, breaking through the mists of autumn, give an after-taste of the lavish beauties of the summer months, and one glance more upon the smiling face of nature, before the blasts of coming winter, which are never long in the rear, tear down, change, and deface all that fragile splendour which clothes the forest and the hill-side. On leaving Glarus, I struck across the meadows to get into the line of the Klönthal, at the hamlet of Riedern, a little to the west of the town. The majority of the inhabitants of this canton seem to be Protestant, as I saw few outward signs of Catholicism; not even beggary, which has hitherto been always its infallible prognostic.

The Klönthal is a glen lying between the precipices of the two Glärnishes to the south, and the Wiggis and Brüschi-alp to the north, and terminated by the Brägel, the passage of which mountain completes the line of route from Glarus into the Muotathal, and canton of Schwytz. Nothing could exceed the magical display of colours in the lower part of this ravine. The disjointed masses of rock which were thickly strewed over its sides and bottom, were covered with brushwood and forest trees of the most splendid tints and of all possible shades, from the deep purple and red of the pear and cherry-trees in the vicinity of the hamlet, the bright yellow of the beech, the still lively green of the oak, and the pale

orange of the mountain-sycamore sprinkled at the bottom and flanks of the glen, to the dark blue and green of the fir and pine at a higher elevation. Deep in the recesses of this valley, the traveller comes upon the margin of a lake about two miles long, and perhaps two thirds in breadth, embedded deep at the foot of the Glärnisch, whose vast gray precipices descend at this point almost perpendicularly to the water. Upon the unruffled and polished surface of this lake, I witnessed the magical effect produced by reflection to a degree far beyond my power of description. Every rock, every shrub, crevice, rill, and speck of snow, from the base of the mountain to the sparkling icy pinnacles which were glowing in the morning sun at the height of several thousand feet from its surface, were reproduced in the tranquil and sunless mirror, so bright, so vivid, and so clear, that on first coming in view of this scene, the eye was for a moment bewildered, and scarcely able to separate the real colours and forms from those that were imaginary.

The lake being passed, the vale widens considerably, and for some time I was sorely entangled in a tract of soft marshy land occupying the lower grounds, which brought me often to a momentary halt, and made me muse with much admiration on the cleverness and daring of Suworrow, who, in the retreat of 1799, traversed the Brägel, and descended the Klönthal, because more convenient paths were denied him. It is hardly possible to conceive how an army and its *matériel* could make its way over such a tract of country: and yet what they suffered here was trifling compared with the distress attend-

ing the subsequent passage over the dreadful pass into the Grison-Oberland, at St. Martin's Hole. That is indeed a tale of horror. If stern necessity made the general conceive the plan of this retreat, it was surely unconquerable perseverance that could bring it to bear.

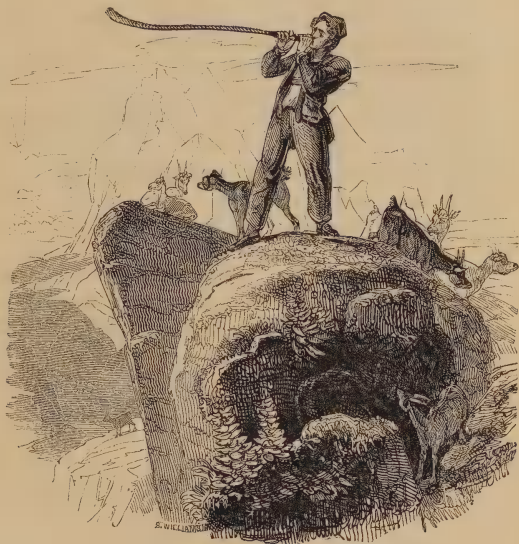
The ascent from this low ground is rapid; well wooded by groups of sycamore, and diversified by *châlets*. The summit of the pass rises about 5,500 feet above the sea; and before I reached this, I had both climbing and wandering enough. Little by little, however, I lost sight of all the deep valleys in the rear, and at length crossed the ridge. A long and stony descent of three leagues brought me to the village of Muotta, at the head of the valley of that name.

The whole length of the vale, till it opens upon the country between the town of Schwytz and the lake of the Four Cantons, abounds with most exquisite scenery. The upper division is tolerably open, and at times very well calculated for cultivation; while the lower contracts itself into a narrow obstructed gorge, more similar in its character to those among the Jura than is ordinarily met with in these mountains.

The inhabitants appeared to be a peculiarly light-hearted race, if I was correct in drawing that inference from the songs which reached my ear from the higher grounds, at intervals during every portion of my passage. I have seldom heard more animated specimens of the national species of melody. Still later, as the sun sunk lower towards the mountain ridges, I listened to the deep prolonged note of the

alp-horn from the pastures above, summoning the cattle to the neighbourhood of the châlets, and could distinguish the tinkling of the bells, as the herd assembled together in obedience to the call. This peculiar instrument is most frequently met with in the more retired parts of the Forest Cantons. It is a tube, about five feet in length, and of the most simple construction, and admitting of but a scanty display of skill in the change and modulation of its tones, even by the most practised lips. On many of the higher alps it is sounded regularly at sun-rise and sun-set, as well as for the purposes of its ordinary appropriation.

Upon my emerging from the Muottathal into the vale of Schwytz, I found the evening so far advanced that I relinquished the idea of seeking a night's shelter in some village on the shore of the lake of the Four Cantons to the left; and, turning to the right, soon entered the town of Schwytz, and found a welcome at the principal inn of the place. Of this, as I had been made aware, the first magistrate of the canton was the master. I found him to be a reverend-looking gentleman, and his lady quite magnificent in the holiday costume of the country and the head-gear of stiff muslin and artificial flowers that belongs to it. In the pauses of the occupations which lightened the long evening, I could not avoid casting many a curious glance upon the worthy couple; though an American would never see what reason there was for my attention and curiosity to be excited. To be at the same time Landamman, the representative of the canton at the General Diet, and the keeper of a homely house for the general enter-



THE ALP HORN.

tainment of town's-men and strangers, seemed to involve anomalies which my English notions could not immediately reconcile. However, my mind was tolerably set at rest during the course of the evening, by the inferences I silently drew, in my corner, from the demeanour and bearing of the individual in question, and respectable dignity of manner in which he appeared to reconcile his two-fold character of host and ruler. There was nothing like assumed importance about him, such as in *Der Herr President* at Rothenthurm, no kind of affected indifference for his civil employment, or ill-timed display of his official dignity, nor any mark, as far as I could discover, that he required more deference or respect from any of his countrymen under his roof, than they evinced to one another. His dame, somewhat advanced in years, was his counterpart, and bore her husband's dignities meekly, and with the same equanimity as himself.

October 19th.—At the early hour of my departure, all objects were enveloped in the usual motionless fog, which however did not fail, ere many hours, to commence that series of movements which are productive of such exquisite and rare effects in a mountainous country.

At the port of Brunnen, I fell into a ring of wonderfully obstinate boatmen, who seemed to consider me as a wind-fall, and were determined to make the most of it, by demanding a most iniquitous sum for the use of their boats in crossing to the port of Buochs. They were perhaps the more persevering in steadily supporting each other in the system of

extortion, as they might be inclined to surmise, with no despicable insight into human nature, that, when a man has driven his advance up to the very water's edge, with every wish to reach the opposite shore, and with no other alternative than that which is afforded by returning step by step upon the road already come, it really bears very hard upon both his pride and his convenience to do the latter. However, my obstinacy had also been roused, and needed but little additional encouragement to make me submit to the inconvenience of retracing my steps. This was afforded me sooner than I could have expected, by the opportunity which presented itself of effecting an honourable retreat: for, in the midst of our debate, the bell of the church beginning to toll, each of my opponents instantly pulled his cap over his eyes in token of devotion, and commenced the voluble recitation of some prescribed form of prayer, without paying any further attention to the heretic. Hereupon I instantly seized my opportunity, and, not knowing how long the enemy might continue hoodwinked, effected a rapid but decent retreat round a corner, and being favoured, like many ancient and modern fugitive heroes, by the fog, fairly gave them the slip. I retraced my steps for a mile, till I could find a bridge over the stream running from the Muottathal into this corner of the lake, and then pursued the line of the shore to the westward, over stock and rock, and through a number of beautiful scenes, for a couple of hours, to Gersau, a village of great beauty, posted on the margin of the lake, under the impending chain of mountains, which terminates in the ridge of the Righi.

Here I took a boat, and in an hour's time found myself at the port of Bekenried in Unterwalden. The passage had been rendered very chill, and rather wearisome, on account of the mist which still rested on the surface of the water; however, long before I reached Stanz, the sun had dissipated it entirely, and a cloudless day's walk brought me to my old quarters at Sachslen.

This was my third visit, and I was more than ever struck with the peculiar beauty of the situation and the surrounding landscape;—but it is not necessary to occupy many pages with my further route homewards.

Nothing can be more exquisite than the mellow light of an autumnal sunset, streaming over the rich meadows, cottages, and trees, which cover the slope towards the lake of Sarnen, and reddening the distant peaks of the Pilatus to the north-east.

The following morning I rose before day-break, and quitted the village just as the bells of the church chimed six, and the dawn was stealing through the dense fog. It was a true autumnal morning—a heavy mist shrouding all objects, large single drops falling from the trees, and ever and anon the broad withered leaf of the sycamore twirling slowly down from the motionless bough.

This state of things lasted till I began to ascend the Kaiserstuhl, when suddenly the sun broke in upon me, and I found myself rising over the level body of mist which filled the whole valley of Sarnen, and stretched far over the country towards the lake of the Four Cantons, leaving all the heights far and near perfectly unobscured. Reaching Lungern, I

immediately ascended the Brünig, often turning round to glance once more upon that exquisite line of country through which I had passed.

Such a scene of autumnal splendour as I witnessed on the heights, I shall never perhaps see again. The slight frosts prevailing on the mountains, for an hour or two before sun-rise, had changed the foliage of the scattered forest of sycamores, which bordered the sheltered pastures on the crest of the mountain, from dark green to the brightest orange: a tint which was rendered doubly brilliant by the rays of an unclouded sun, which shot upon it from behind, and the dark purple back-ground of towering mountains against which they displayed themselves. The ground was strewn with leaves of the same brilliant hue, and as the wind shook the branches, thousands showered slowly down in the sunshine.

As I had some trifling business to transact at Meyringen, I descended eastward to that village, and subsequently pursued my walk from thence through the whole length of the Haslithal to the lake of Brienz.

A row of three hours over the surface of this noble sheet of water, brought me to Interlaken a little after sunset. The Jungfrau, in all her magnificence with the last reflection of the glowing west on her gigantic form, was still visible through the opening towards Lauterbrunnen.

The following day, I pursued a well-known path upon the shore of the lake of Thun, by the baths of Leissigen to Æschi and Wimmis, and reached Erlenbach for the last time this season, after an absence of about five weeks.

But a few days elapsed after my return, when all that splendour and beauty with which I had seen the forms of external nature clothed during the concluding period of my rambles, began to vanish from the face of the landscape. The early dawn struggled with difficulty through the heavy masses of portentous cloud which dragged themselves slowly over the upper regions of the neighbouring mountains. Occasional gusts of a raw and chilling wind came whistling through the valley, scattering the foliage of the forest-trees in an irregular but constant shower upon the earth; and if, towards evening, the sun struggling through the vapours, chased the clouds from the heads of the Niesen and his neighbours, it was only to throw his red and glowing beams upon a waste of snow now occupying all the higher portions of the country. Every thing boded the swift approach of winter and the termination of the season when wandering would be either agreeable or practicable.

The roads became crowded by long lines of cattle compelled to leave their last range of mountain-pasture, and return to the vallies; day by day the snow-line descended perceptibly lower and lower down the sides of the mountains, and the summons for my return into winter-quarters could not be mistaken.

On the last day of October I quitted my summer-quarters in the Simmenthal,—with the intention of returning once more into the mountains before my departure for England.

My route to Berne, and thence to Neuchâtel, offered little new to my eye. In my rapid march

to the former town, I was spurred forward by busy thoughts and a sharp wind, often turning my eyes back towards the Niesen, and my thoughts to the sheltered and tranquil valley beneath it. The flying storms were evidently adding a fresh coat to the preceding day's snow. Many minor avalanches form and fall upon its precipitous sides in the winter; and in the beginning of spring a single one, of considerable dimensions, descends into the woods at a certain part of its base. Its fall is always distinctly heard at the town of Thun at several leagues distance. Till this has fallen, the peasants of the neighbourhood esteem the cuckoo, the swallow, and the primrose but indifferent prophets, and the spring not yet fairly begun.

The immediate resumption of my winter's occupations on my arrival at Neuchâtel, and my subsequent pursuance of them for the four following months, prevent my adding much to the sketches contained in the chapter which I devoted to this corner of the country.

The winter of 1826-7 was very severe in both the Alps and the Jura. The immense quantities of snow that fell upon the slopes of both were almost unprecedented. Many of the higher pastures were judged to be buried to the depth of sixteen and twenty feet, and in still higher and more exposed regions, no idea could be formed of the vast accumulations.

It was towards the middle of February, that, having commenced my preparations for departure from Switzerland, I turned my steps one morning before day-break, towards Berne and the Oberland.

Whenever my good fortune brings me into the open air some time before sun-rise, be it either in winter or summer, I am always inclined to wonder at the general indifference to hours which may certainly be considered as the most beautiful and vivifying of any in the four-and-twenty. Even in this unpropitious season, when all nature is buried in the depth of winter, there is sufficient to warrant the use of these terms, at least in this country.

The first glimmering of the early dawn stealing along the eastern horizon, brings into strong relief the outlines of the Berne Alps, behind which the sun rises at this period of the year. Little by little they rear themselves, bleak and grey, from the brightening sky. From moment to moment they become more distinct, and their outline harder, and better defined; while, in the middle ground, the pale and uncertain light steals gradually over the surface of the lake, motionless under the influence of the frost, and fading insensibly to the westward into the shadow of the low coasts of Friburg and Vaud. Another quarter of an hour—the air freshens, the stars fade entirely from the sky; day-light spreads rapidly over the steep forested sides of the Jura; the long ridge of the Chasseral already glimmers with the earliest sunbeam striking the sheet of unbroken snow that covers its heights; the lake glows with the reflection of the golden light which now shoots upward from the east in long streams:—the Jungfrau, the Eigers, and their brethren, assume a depth of shade which approaches to jet, contrasted with the flood of light behind their points; here and there a portion of the glaciers in other parts of the

chain, already reflect the sun-beam, and glow like a sea of fire: another minute,—the sun's rays dart over the whole landscape, and, at the same instant, the Berne Alps, the intermediate country and a great portion of the lake become hidden by the bright and glowing atmosphere.

Still one tranquil day among the Alps! A clear cloudless, winter's day; the sun shining for a few brief hours with almost insufferable brightness upon the snows which now covered all objects, from the margin of the Simmen, to the far peaks of the Niesen and Bettfluh rising above their endless waste of frozen pastures, except where the pine forest and precipices afforded points for the eye to rest upon amidst the dazzling brilliance of the scene. The Bize blew with great violence on the summits of the mountains, as we might judge from a rose-coloured cloud of snowy particles, which appeared to linger about the highest pinnacles as long as the sun was above the horizon. Yet all the splendours of this display, and the yet more wonderful spectacle of the red sunset streaming upon the superior parts of these vast mountains, must yield to the magic beauty of the cloudless winter's night; when, after the last glimmer from the western horizon had faded away, the full moon rose majestically above the white ridges, and hung over the mountains for many a long hour; progressively shifting her accompanying masses of light and shade from one portion of the snowy Alps above to another. That was indeed a scene of enchantment.

Distress of various kinds had been the consequence of the great falls of snow. For a considerable time

fears had been entertained for the life of the individual who farms the little hospital of the Schwarenbach, on the Gemmi-pass, between the Daubensee and Kandersteg; as it was known that he had been buried with his châlet for a considerable time under the immense bodies of snow accumulated over them. After suffering much from hunger for the period of three weeks, and from fear lest his roof might give way, he was at last rescued from his distress. Many fruitless attempts were made to reach him from the Kanderthal; at length two peasants contrived at the risk of their lives to make good their ascent, and to reach the hospital with provisions; but when there, the weather changed so much for the worse, that there was no practicability of an immediate return. Some days after, six others undertook the same hazardous adventure, and after narrowly escaping death under an enormous avalanche descending from the Altels, and having been twice forced to recede, they also succeeded and gained the châlet; whence, by seizing a favourable moment, the whole company fortunately regained the vale in safety.

The Baths of Leuk had been totally deserted on account of the danger impending over them from the avalanches: and the village of Biel in the Upper Vallais, was suddenly overwhelmed and destroyed in the course of the same month by an avalanche of extraordinary power, which descended a ravine two leagues in length before it reached the village.

But the task that I have prescribed for myself is at an end.

The severity of the season returned with tenfold rigour before the close of the month ; the violence of the snow-storms and the period of their continuance, was almost unexampled, and at the same time the frosts were correspondingly severe. At La Brevine, the highest village in the canton, situated in the Jura at the elevation of upwards of 3,000 feet above the sea, the thermometer of Fahrenheit stood at 34° below 0. and in Neuchâtel itself the cold was proportionably severe, though the prevalence of a strong Bize prevented the lake from freezing. The regular passage over the Jura was for a time interrupted, and one stratum of snow after another was added to those already blocking up the roads, and heaped upon the mountain-sides. However, the thaw commenced early in March, and this was the signal for my departure from a country, which, much as I may love my own, had long ceased to be a foreign land to me.

From the ridge near the hamlet of Brod, in the great defile of the Reuse, whence the approaching traveller catches his first view of the Alps, I turned once more to look back upon the home I was quitting.

The level beams of the rising sun were glistening on the majestic forms of the Berne Alps on the horizon, lighting up the nearer chain of the Stockhorn and the broken country at its base, and shining bright and clear upon the lake and shores of Neuchâtel, at the foot of the mountains by which I was surrounded. But why should I scruple to record the bitterness of that moment? If my senses and imagination had indeed reaped true and healthy en-

joyment from the contemplation of the vast and indescribably beautiful scenes of God's creation displayed in that land; if the friends I had won were indeed true and steadfast—surely I did well to sorrow that I must see those scenes and those friends no longer: and, if at this hour, doubt hangs over the future, and the path I must pursue would seem to be questionable and obscure, surely I do well to glance at the road I have come, and the years that are gone by, to mark the mercy and goodness that have followed me hitherto.

APPENDIX.

FLORA OF THE CHAIN OF THE STOCKHORN.

CANTON OF BERNE.

For these lists the writer is indebted to the friendship of M. le Pasteur Studer, of Erlenbach.

Achillea atrata.	Astragalus uralensis.
Aconitum lycoctonum. napellus.	Astrantia major.
Aira flexuosa. caryophyllea.	Athamanta cretensis. libanotis.
Alchemilla alpina. fissa.	Bartsia alpina.
Allium victorialis. schænoprasum.	Biscutella lævigata.
Agrostis rupestris. canina. alpina.	Botrychium lunaria.
Andromeda polyfolia.	Bupleurum ranunculoides.
Androsace bryoides. chamæjasme. lactea. villosa.	Bromus gracilis.
Anemone alpina. narcissiflora. vernalis.	Briza media.
Arabis alpina. stricta. nutans.	Cacalia alpina. albifrons.
Arbutus alpina. uva-ursi.	Campanula barbata. rhomboidea. thyrsoides. alpina.
Arenaria ciliata. multicaulis.	Carduus defloratus. personata.
Arnica bellidiastrum. scorpioides.	Carex atrata. alpestris. clandestina. curta. capillaris. firma. cæspitosa. ferruginea. montana. mielichoferi. varia. pendula.
Aster alpinus.	
Astragalus campestris. montanus.	

Carex præcox.
ornithopoda.
alba.
stricta.
pauciflora.
Centaurea montana.
Cerastium alpinum.
strictum.
Cerinth glabra.
Cherleria sedoides.
Cineraria aurantiaca.
Cirsium acaule.
Cnicus eriophorus.
Corydalis fabacea.
Cratægus chamæmespilus.
aria.
amelanchier.

Crepis austriaca.
Convallaria polygonatum.
Circæa alpina.
Crocus vernus.
Cuscuta epithymum.

Dentaria pentaphylla
Dianthus sylvestris.
Digitalis grandiflora.
parviflora.

Draba aizoides.
pyrenaica.
stellata.
tomentosa.
Dryas octopetala.

Elyna spicata.
Epilobium montanum.
alpinum.
Erica herbacea.
Erigeron alpinum.
uniflorum.
Erinus alpinus.
Eriophorum alpinum.
Euphrasia minima.

Festuca amethystina.
Halleri.
lævigata.
nigricans.
varia.

Galium sylvestre.
Gentiana acaulis.
bavarica.
ciliata.
campestris.
utriculosa.

Gentiana asclepiadea.
nivalis.
lutea.
purpurea.
cruciata.
verna.
germanica.

Geranium phœum.
sylvaticum.

Globularia cordifolia.
nudicaulis.

Gnaphalium leontopodium.
norvegicum.
alpinum.
dioicum.

Geum montanum.
Gypsophila repens.

Hedysarum alpinum.
Helianthemum celandicum.
Hieracium aureum.
aurantiacum.
amplexicaule.
Jacquini.
paludosum.
villosum.

Hyoseris foetida.

Imperatoria ostruthium.

Juncus triglumis.
flavescens.

Laserpitium latifolium.
siler.
simplex.

Lepidium alpinum.

Lilium martagon.

Linaria alpina.

Lonicera alpigena.
cœrulea.
nigra.

Luzula lutea.

Melissa calamintha.
Myosotis perennis.
Myagrum saxatile.
Mespilus eriocarpa.

Nardus stricta.

Ophrys cordata.
myodes.
monorchis.

Orchis globosa.

Orchis nigra.
 albida.
 viridis.
 Ornithogalum luteum.
 Orobus luteus.

Pedicularis foliosa.
 versicolor.
 verticillata.
 Phaca australis.
 frigida.
 Phalangium serotinum.
 liliastrum.
 Phyteuma orbicularis.
 hemisphærica.
 Phellandrium mutellina.
 Phleum alpinum.
 Michellii.

Pimpinella fl. rubro.
 magna.
 Pinguicula alpina.
 Plantago alpina.
 atrata.

Poa alpina.
 distichophylla.
 nemoralis.

Polygala amara.
 chamæbuxus.
 Polygonum viviparum.
 Potentilla aurea.

crocea.
 Primula auricula.
 farinosa.

Pyrola minor.
 Pyrethrum Halleri.

Ranunculus alpestris.
 aconitifolius.
 montanus.
 Villarsii.

Rhamnus alpinus.
 Rhododendrum ferrugineum.
 hirsutum.

Ribes alpinum.
 Rosa alpina.
 cinnamomea.
 pyrenaica.

Rumex alpinus.
 scutatus.

Rubus saxatilis.

Salix retusa.
 reticulata.
 tenuifolia.

Salvia glutinosa.
 Saponaria ocymoides
 Satyrium repens
 Saxifraga aizoon.
 aizoides.
 androsacea.
 cæsia.
 muscoides.
 oppositifolia.
 rotundifolia.
 stellaris.

Scabiosa lucida.
 Scirpus cæspitosus.
 Sedum atratum.
 Sempervivum montanum.
 Senecio doricum.
 Sesleria cœrulea.
 Silene acaulis.
 4 dentata.
 Soldanella alpina.
 Sonchus alpinus.
 Spergula saginoides.
 Stachys alpina.
 Swertia perennis.

Teucrium montanum.
 Thalictrum minus.
 Thesium alpinum.
 Thlaspi montanum.
 Thymus alpinus.
 Tozzia alpina.
 Trifolium spadiceum.
 cæspitosum.
 montanum.

Trollius europæus.
 Turrilis hirsuta.
 Tussilago alba.
 alpina.

Uvularia amplexifolia.

Vaccinium uliginosum.
 vitis-idæa.
 Valeriana tripteris.
 montana.

Veratrum album.
 Veronica aphylla.
 alpina.
 fruticulosa.
 saxatilis.

Vicia sylvatica.
 Viola biflora.
 calcarata.
 lutea.
 tricolor.

ADDITIONAL FLORA OF THE OPPOSITE CHAIN OF
THE THURNEN.

Alchemilla pentaphyllea.
Arabis bellidifolia.

 cœrulea.
 scabra.
 turrita.

Arnica montana.
Astrantia minor.
Arenaria polygonoides.
Azalea procumbens.

Cardamine resedifolia.
Carex juncifolia.
 foetida.
 nigra.

Cerastium latifolium.

Eriophorum capitatum.

Festuca hirsuta.

Gentiana bractiphylia.

Hieracium alpinum.
 albidum.
 blattarioides.
 glaucum.
 Halleri.
 Schraderi.

Hypericum dubium.

Hypochæris uniflora.

Iberis rotundifolia.

Juncus trifidus.
 Jacquini.

Leontodon hispidum.

Leontodon montanum.
 pyrenaicum.

Linum alpinum.
Luzula spadicea.
 flavescens.
 spicata.

Onobrychis montana.

Phaca astragalina.
Phalangium liliago.
Pedicularis comosa.
Poa laxa.
 minor.

Pyrola uniflora.
Pyrethrum alpinum.

Ranunculus platanifolius.
Rumex digynus.

Salix herbacea.
 prunifolia.
Saxifraga biflora.
 cuneifolia.

Schoenus fuscus.
Senecio cordifolius.
 sarracenicus.
Sibbaldia procumbens.
Silene acaulis.
 fl. albo.

Thrincia hispida.
Trifolium alpinum.
 rubens.

Viola montana.
 cenisia.

THE END.

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